

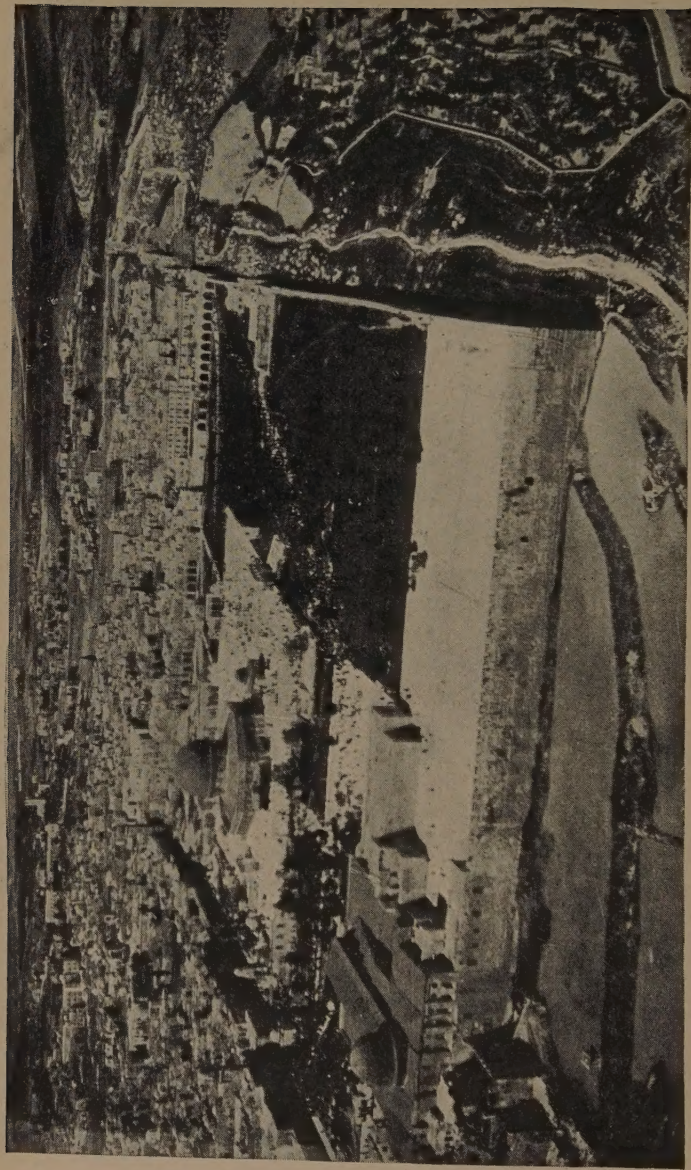
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Air-view of Jerusalem, looking from South to North, showing the Temple area. The Mosque in the centre is the Dome of the Rock, built on the actual site of Solomon's Temple. Outside the wall to the right is the valley of the Kidron. The ancient city extended much further to the South than modern Jerusalem.

Photograph by Sir Alan Cobham

THE CLARENDON BIBLE

Under the general editorship of
BISHOP STRONG, BISHOP WILD
AND CANON G. H. BOX

OLD TESTAMENT VOL. IV

ISRAEL AFTER THE EXILE SIXTH AND FIFTH CENTURIES, B.C.

BY

W. F. LOFTHOUSE
D.D.

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EDITORS' PREFACE

THE problem of the teaching of Holy Scripture at the present time presents many difficulties. There is a large and growing class of persons who feel bound to recognize that the progress of archaeological and critical studies has made it impossible for them to read, and still more to teach, it precisely in the old way. However strongly they may believe in inspiration, they cannot any longer set before their pupils, or take as the basis of their interpretation, the doctrine of the verbal inspiration of Holy Scripture. It is with the object of meeting the requirements not only of the elder pupils in public schools, their teachers, students in training colleges, and others engaged in education, but also of the clergy and the growing class of the general public, which, we believe, takes an interest in Biblical studies, that the present series is projected.

The writers will be responsible each for his own contribution only, and their interpretation is based upon the belief that the books of the Bible require to be placed in their historical context, so that, as far as possible, we may recover the sense which they bore when written. Any application of them must rest upon this ground. It is not the writers' intention to set out the latest notions of radical scholars—English or foreign—nor even to describe the exact position at which the discussion of the various problems has arrived. The aim of the series is rather to put forward a constructive view of the books and their teaching, taking into consideration and welcoming results as to which there is a large measure of agreement among scholars.

In regard to form, subjects requiring comprehensive treatment are dealt with in Essays, whether forming part of the introduction or interspersed among the notes. The notes themselves are mainly concerned with the subject-matter of the books and the points of interest (historical, doctrinal, &c.) therein

presented; they deal with the elucidation of words, allusions, and the like only so far as seems necessary to a proper comprehension of the author's meaning.

THOMAS STRONG.	} <i>General</i>	
HERBERT WILD.		} <i>Editors.</i>
GEORGE H. BOX.		

AUTHOR'S PREFACE

THE general purpose and scope of this volume is explained in the Editors' Preface, and I have followed the plan embodied in Vol. III of this series, *The Decline and Fall of the Hebrew Kingdoms*, by Dr. T. H. Robinson. The age here considered, from the Exile to the end of the Persian Period, involves several very difficult questions, as for example, the rearrangement and dating of much of the prophetic material embedded in the canonical Prophets, the character of the return from the exile, the relation of Ezra to Nehemiah and his place in history, and the circumstances of the development of the written law, as well as the rise of the Samaritan community. Without a much more elaborate reference to the extensive literature on the subject than was possible in these pages, it was almost impossible to avoid the appearance of dogmatism; in each instance I have endeavoured to state, with the brevity necessitated by limitations of space, the arguments for the more important views, and the reasons for those which seemed to me the more probable.

I have arranged the whole material in what appears to be, approximately, the chronological order, selecting for annotation from the writings which fall within the period those passages that seem to be the more important or the more difficult. The Revisers' Text has been used as the basis of the comments.

There are three documents or sets of documents which throw a valuable though tantalizing light on the Hebrew literature of the period—the inscription in which Cyrus records his conquest of Babylon, the letters and deeds belonging to the Jewish military colony at Elephantine, and the reference of Josephus to the Samaritan Schism. For the first I have used the translation of Professor R. W. Rogers (*Cuneiform Parallels to the Old Testament*, New York, Eaton & Mains, 1912), and for the second, that of Mr. A. E. Cowley (*Aramaic Papyri of the Fifth Century*, Oxford, 1923). I have inserted a translation of the relevant

passages from Josephus in the additional note on the Samaritan Schism.

The general plan of the book, and of the series, makes a certain amount of overlapping unavoidable. But I hope that numerous cross-references and a rather full index will enable the student to follow definite paths in what, from the historical and literary conditions of the period, must appear a somewhat bewildering jungle.

I have to acknowledge much valuable help from the General Editors, especially from Canon Box. The longer chronological table at the end of the book I owe to Miss E. W. Hippisley, and the plan of Jerusalem to Professor R. E. Macalister. The plan of Ezekiel's Temple is taken from the edition of Ezekiel in the *Century Bible* by the permission of Messrs. Nelson. The index of proper names has been prepared by my friend the Rev. W. F. Flemington. From the Clarendon Press I have received constant kindness, consideration, and assistance.

For a book covering so wide a territory it has been impossible to compress within the available space an adequate bibliography. Many students will have access to guidance on further reading. Those who wish to follow up the study of any particular book will find useful hints on literature in the commentaries published in the volumes of the Cambridge Bible for Schools, and in the *Century Bible*. Fuller lists will be found in *A Scripture Bibliography* (Nesbit, 6d. net), and Norman Baynes, *Israel among the Nations* (S. C. M., 1927).

W. F. L.

HANDSWORTH, *January* 1928.

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¹ These dates must be considered doubtful. See the discussions below, pp. 104, 198, 235 ff.

THE

PERSIAN EMPIRE

English Miles



--- Northern boundary of the Assyrian and Babylonian Empires



INTRODUCTION

A. THE EXILIC ENVIRONMENT

FOR most readers of the Old Testament the history of the sacred nation ends at the fall of Jerusalem in 586 B.C. A good deal of the literature indeed was produced later; but the historical records are confused and uninteresting, and as a definite political community Israel is no more. The real fact is that the history of Israel is divided into two parts at 586. The first contains the rise and fall of the nation, with its kings and prophets and its fierce internal and external conflicts; the second has given us most of the Hebrew literature which appeals to our modern minds, the rise of the religious community which has had a continuous development till our own day, the religious conceptions which have shaped much of our own Christianity, and the events which made the world into which Jesus was born and where the first achievements of the Church were gained. If there were fewer familiar characters like Moses, David, and Elijah, and fewer prophets like Amos, Hosea, and Isaiah, there were great men like Nehemiah and the Maccabees, and dramatic episodes not the less important because they need some reconstruction to be fully understood.

Again, the word 'exile' is misleading. It was not the exile of a political misdemeanant, like Bolingbroke in *Richard II*, who must leave his own country, his home and his friends, but can then go where he chooses. It was the transportation of a whole society—men and women and children—so that they could begin something of their old life elsewhere. All classes were represented, priests, merchants, artisans, and craftsmen. They could organize both their worship and their business. The only thing impossible for them was political self-government, and even thus they were not necessarily much worse off than their new neighbours.

Another misconception is as to the number of the exiles. It has been generally taken for granted that the whole population

The Exilic Environment

of Judah was carried away. This was not the fact. There were indeed three transportations, in 597, 586, and afterwards. These, as given in the Old Testament, amounted in all to about 50,000. The first batch, we are told, contained the *élite* of the population, with the king and the members of his court. This included the prophet Ezekiel, a number of the Jerusalem priests, and probably the chief statesmen of the capital. The names of the politicians known in Josiah's time, who exerted a weighty though perhaps diminished influence under Jehoiakim (cf. Jer. xxvi. 16), no longer appear after 597; and what we know of the government under Zedekiah certainly suggests the inexperience and rashness of men unexpectedly called to high place. These, however, were not all. Gedaliah, a scion of one of the noblest families, was in Jerusalem in 586, and was left in Judaea by Nebuchadnezzar to organize the new régime. Sennacherib claims to have deported from Judah in 701 the enormous number of 200,150 persons. But this probably represents the whole population of the captured cities, 46 in all, excluding Jerusalem. In 1922 the population of the whole of Palestine was estimated at 754,500, about 65 to the square mile; that of Jerusalem 64,000. Guthe has estimated the population of Jerusalem under Nehemiah at 10,000. If we regard it as about 25,000 under Zedekiah, the entire population of Judah and Jerusalem may well have been 225,000, so that after the three deportations the population left behind would be more than three times the number of Jews in Babylon.

We must, however, allow for a large migration to Egypt; and the general disorganization in Palestine, clearly shown in Jer. xlii, would prevent, at least for some time, any settled social or political life. Hence it was natural for the exiles, though relatively few in number, to regard themselves as the real trustees of the old traditions. This we know was the view of Jeremiah (ch. xxiv), and it would be felt still more definitely after 586.

The removal to Babylon, however, meant inevitably a far-reaching psychological change. Tolstoy and Dostoevsky have made us familiar with the experience of Russian exiles, exchanging civilization for the barbarism of Siberia. The change for



RUINS OF ANCIENT BABYLON

The buildings here uncovered go back to the third millennium, B.C.

the Jewish exiles, as far as their surroundings were concerned, was more like that which would be felt by a group of Jews to-day taken from some remote centre in Eastern Europe and placed in London or New York. Compared with the ancient and opulent cities of Mesopotamia, Jerusalem was at best, as it always has been, a small provincial town. Instead of the one modest temple and the recently dismantled local shrines, the newcomers saw huge seven-storied buildings dedicated to gods whose worship was conducted with a pomp and display undreamt of in Judah. Torn from their own simple and familiar ceremonies, in which many of them indeed had done their best to imitate Mesopotamian cults (cf. Ezek. viii), they had to contemplate the practice of a religion which made their own memories poor and contemptible, and the exaltation of gods before whom Jahveh would seem like a pathetically poor relation. It would have been small wonder if, as we must suppose to have been the case with the Northern Israelites deported by Sargon from Samaria (roughly 27,300 persons according to Sargon's own statement), they had lost their faith altogether.

In the ancient world, religion and politics went together ; and the political splendour of Babylon was now at its height. Assyria, which for four centuries had dominated Western Asia and had weakened if not crushed all its rivals, was now destroyed. Egypt, which for a time had dared to dispute the prize with Nebuchadnezzar, had been decisively repulsed ; and neither the Medes nor the Scythians, without whose help Nabonidus would hardly have captured either Ashur or Nineveh or Harran, seemed inclined to challenge his more vigorous successor Nebuchadnezzar for the hegemony of the Eastern world. Something of the extent and intricacy of Babylonian commercial and industrial life can be learnt from the Code of Hammurabi, some 1,500 years earlier ; but the documents of the time of Nabonidus himself witness to business activities which a magnate of Lombard Street or Wall Street might condescend to recognize as modern. Centuries before the exile and even before the exodus from Egypt, Babylonian culture had penetrated and almost subdued Canaan ; the Tel-el-Amarna letters and the Book of the Covenant (Exod. xxi-xxiii. 19) are sufficient evidence of this. But the

general conditions of life in Palestine in the time of the earlier prophets seem mediaeval rather than modern. Perhaps they might better be compared with conditions in a native state in India. And the exiles, contrasting their own little society across the desert with the multitudinous affairs of these enormous cities, must indeed have drunk the bitter cup of humiliation and contempt.

Were they absorbed into the new civilization? If they had been, no one would have been surprised. But they were not. Quite apart from their political helplessness, the denunciations of the prophets would have led us to suppose that they had none of the moral qualities which could have preserved their loyalty to their traditions or their faith. According to Jeremiah and Ezekiel, Judah was no better than her sister Samaria had been; and Samaria was no more. But of the actual attitude and conditions of the exiles' life we can gather a good deal from Jeremiah and Ezekiel themselves, and from the later poets of the time. Close relations were maintained with the survivors in Palestine after 597 and even 586; Jeremiah, as we have noticed, had a high opinion of the exiles; and although he believed that they would return in two generations or so, he strongly advised them to make up their minds to settle down where they were. This seems to imply a certain restlessness among the exiles. In Jerusalem before 586 there was a confident expectation that the exiles would speedily return (Jer. xxviii). Ezekiel agreed with Jeremiah, both as to the relative superiority of the deportees and the futility of any hopes of return, save in a still vaguer future. Every glimpse he gives us of the life he shared with them shows us a community which was resolved on making the best of its opportunities. Some forty years later, the poet whom we know as 'Second Isaiah' sounded a very different note. His songs form one long call to be ready to leave Babylon and be led across the desert sands to the old home. But the very urgency of his call reveals the unwillingness with which he expected it to be received. Jeremiah's advice had been carried out too well.

We must not imagine indeed that when the Jews left their country they left behind also their love for it, or that they did

not know the burden of the exile sighing for his native land. Ezekiel's touching apostrophes to the 'mountains of Israel' show how at least one of them longed for the rugged territory that he was never to see again. No more poignant expressions of home-sickness have ever been written than in some of the poems in Lamentations, and perhaps in Pss. xlii, xliii. Sometimes a dull rage against his masters would possess the Jew (Ps. cxxxvii). Further, the poems of Second Isaiah breathe a deep hatred and scorn of Babylon, and when, in 539, Babylon fell before Cyrus, more than one poet raised a joyous and exultant cry of triumph that reminds us of the triumph-song of Nahum over Assyria or of Ezekiel over Egypt.¹

This was only natural. But, at least in the earlier part of the exile, it is probable that Babylon treated her captives with consideration. The clemency (or was it cautious statesmanship?) of Babylon towards Jerusalem in 597, and again in 586, evinces a desire to make things as easy as might be for the defeated Jews. That Nebuchadnezzar was something more than a mere tyrant is clear enough from the uniform respect with which Jeremiah and Ezekiel regard Babylon. Neither of them, though they could be fiery enough when they chose, have a single word to say against the Babylonian rule, nor is there any tradition of specific acts of maliciousness or oppression to the Jews on the part of their conquerors. The emotions expressed in Ps. cxxxvii were deep and possibly widespread; but the Jews seem to have hated Babylon (so far as they did actually hate her) a good deal more than Babylon ill-treated the Jews.

The truth is that the Jews were possessed of more religious strength and stability than some of the prophetic invectives would lead us to imagine. An Elijah is always tempted to forget the seven thousand who do not bow the knee to Baal. And the Jews brought with them a great deal into exile which the years of exile taught them to value afresh. First, they had their faith, both in Jahveh and in themselves as Jahveh's people. Without this, they could never have survived the disturbing influences of their uprooting. With it, they learnt in time to see, in the God of their fathers and of their devastated land, a deity before whom

¹ See pp. 132, 136 (Is. xiii, xiv; Jer. I, li).



THE RECOVERY OF ANCIENT BABYLONIA
Excavations on the site of the Sumerian Palace at Kish

8 The Exilic Environment

the magnificent idols of Babylon were sheer absurdity. They could not have reached this conviction but for Ezekiel. Yet both the sermons and the excited rhapsodies of Ezekiel, as well as his detailed sketch of a rubric for the restored Temple and a constitution for the new community, show that he could count on the existence of a body of hearers who had a real and deep interest in religion. The exiles were not further from Jahveh, but nearer to him, than they had been in their own homes.

Secondly, they had their distinctive practices of circumcision and the keeping of the Sabbath. Such outward and, as it were, 'sacramental' signs of its religious existence a community must have. The ritual of Temple and altar was gone; sacrifices, whose futility the older prophets had unceasingly proclaimed, were now impossible. The practices which needed no sacred place were the heirs of their importance. Later, they became the hall-marks of Judaism all over the world.

Thirdly, the Jews had their historical writings. This is not to say that they had a historical canon. But a good deal of what we call the Pentateuch, along with certain parts of Judges, Samuel, and Kings, is older than the exile. Possibly these writings had not been greatly valued by the older community in Palestine; but among the relatively more educated minority in Babylon, they gained a new popularity.¹

Fourthly, they had the idea of a common worship and a new desire for it. Even before the exile, prayer was understood by the Hebrews (and not only by the rarer souls among them) as nowhere else; and when the religious festivals of the Temple were impossible, the Jews could continue their meetings for prayer, and for religious conversation and instruction (cf. Ezek. viii. 1; xiv. 1). The Synagogue was the child of the exile; for although the Synagogue as an institution did not develop till much later, the needs that led to its rise first appeared in the exilic period.

¹ The two books of Kings (originally one) rely on earlier authorities (1 Kings xi. 41; xiv. 19, 29, &c.), but must have been written in their present form during the exile, for they bring the narrative down to the fall of Jerusalem, and make no reference to a return; but note also 2 Kings xxv. 27 ff., and compare 1 Kings iv. 24 (Hebr. and R.V. marg., written from the standpoint of one who lived to the east of the Euphrates).

And lastly, the Jews had their law. Twenty-four years before the first deportation, a code of religious and civil law was solemnly promulgated and accepted in Jerusalem. This law has been generally regarded as identical with our Deuteronomy (see pp. 54 f.). It would be too much to assert positively that either Josiah, or the Jews in their first years in Babylon, possessed the whole of our Deuteronomy, or even of the central part of it (chh. xii-xxviii). But there can be little doubt that they did possess, in written form, the commands which formed its basis, and on which Josiah's strenuous measures of reform had been built. And they possessed a number of older precepts and precedents which, it would seem, Deuteronomy was intended to supersede, but which it could not destroy. The law of the central sanctuary, which most deeply impressed Josiah and his subjects, was inapplicable to the new conditions in Babylon; so was very much else. If it could not be obeyed there, it could be, and it was, the more valued and studied. And its spirit was obeyed. Whatever might be true of the survival of the old bad practices in Palestine and in Egypt (see pp. 218 f.), idolatry was unknown in the Jewish community in Mesopotamia. While in Palestine the Jews had copied the Babylonian rites, doubtless for political as well as religious reasons, in Babylon itself they learnt to laugh at the Babylonian idols.

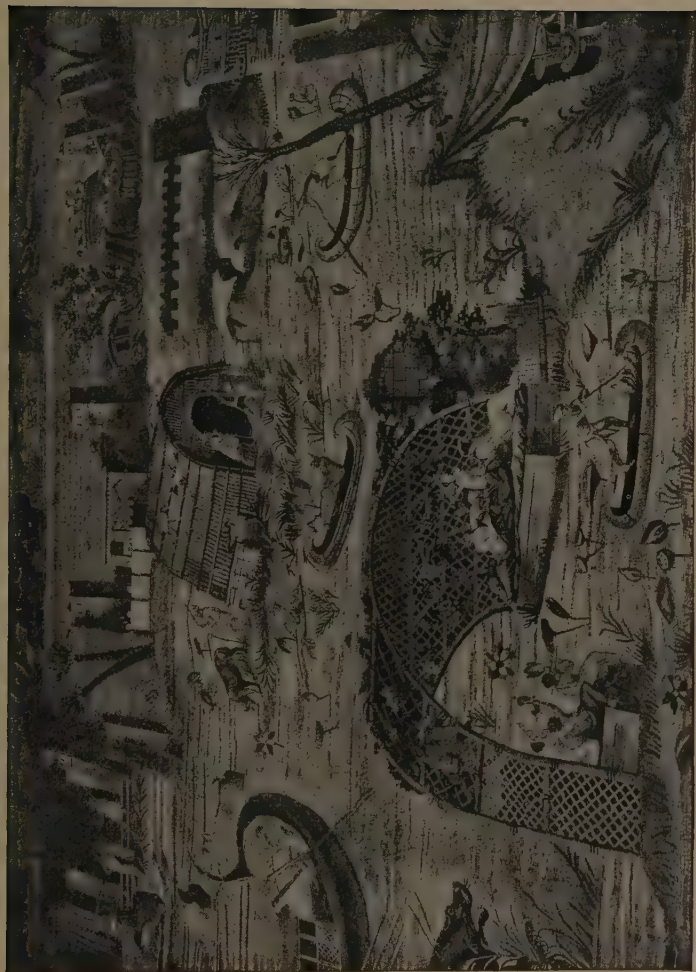
But Babylon was not the only home of the Jews outside Palestine. After the transportation of some 50,000 of the Jews to the East, the survivors in Judah were left in charge of Gedaliah. After his murder, his lieutenant Johanan, in spite of the protest of Jeremiah, led a large company into Egypt. Jeremiah xliii. 5 f. implies that this included all that was left of the population, even with the fugitives who had already made their way back to their old homes. But the subsequent narrative (Jer. xlv) cannot be taken to mean, what indeed we could hardly suppose, that Johanan led into Egypt three times as many persons as Nebuchadnezzar had taken into Babylon; nor could Egypt well have received them all at one time. Jeremiah xlv shows that they were living near the frontier as well as at Memphis and other towns in lower Egypt. This was not, however, the first immigration into Egypt. Jewish mercenaries had been employed

in Egypt in the middle of the previous century, and intercourse with Egypt had been common at least since the time of Isaiah.

Egypt at this time was enjoying something of her old prosperity. She had regained her independence from Assyria in 646. She had actually allied herself with her ancient rival, in the days of Assyria's decline, against the Medes, Scythians, and Babylon. Arriving as usual too late on the scene to be of real assistance, Necho, the Egyptian Pharaoh (609-593), had tried to snatch the prize of the now fallen Assyrian empire from Babylon. He was unsuccessful in this ; but his kingdom remained at peace till the Persians did what no other Asiatic power had done, and annexed Egypt to their empire.

Popular feeling, while Jerusalem still stood, had often veered to Egypt and looked for Egyptian help, though always in vain. But the prophets were the consistent foes of Egyptian influence. Jeremiah opposed, as we have seen, any thought of immigration into Egypt, though the party which made its way there dragged him with it. And none of Ezekiel's outbursts of hate are more sustained and elaborate than the invectives against Egypt. Whatever the reason, the character of the immigrants in Egypt was very different from that of the captives in Babylon. This can be seen from the narrative of Jeremiah referred to above. The Jewish community acted as if Deuteronomy had never been heard of, and as if they were back in the days of Manasseh. In reality, they seem to have been following the reactionaries whose idolatries in the reign of Zedekiah horrified Ezekiel and his more scrupulous fellow-exiles in Babylon.

In the year 495 B.C. begins a series of documents from a Jewish military colony in upper Egypt—perhaps the same colony from which came the Jews 'from Pathros' who saw Jeremiah on his arrival across the Egyptian border. They too knew nothing of Deuteronomy, nor, as it would seem, of the first commandment of the Decalogue. They had a temple of Jahveh and they were devoted to its worship, but they had other gods as well ; they did not seem to suspect for a moment that there was anything reprehensible in this, nor did they expect any blame from the Jews of Palestine for it. Later on, the Jews



AN ANCIENT ROMAN MOSAIC, REPRESENTING THE LIFE OF THE DELTA

in Egypt became as strict monotheists as their countrymen elsewhere; but the Egyptian Jew felt the fascination of Gentile culture, if not of Gentile religion, as his brother in Babylon did not. It was the Jewry of Egypt, not of Babylon, that produced the Septuagint, the philosophy of Philo, and the well-meaning but erroneous theology of Apollos. Like colonists in other lands, the Jews in Egypt were full of loyal and patriotic feelings towards their old home, but little influenced by the changes that took place elsewhere. The Jews in Babylon could bend Palestine to their stricter ideals; they scarcely touched Egypt.

We have already referred to the conditions in Judah after the deportations. Judah was not entirely denuded of its inhabitants, but it must have been sadly under-populated. Second Isaiah gives a melancholy though possibly exaggerated picture of its condition some forty or forty-five years after the fall of the city. The capital was reduced to the condition of an unwalled town, which meant that it was no better than a large village, and the actual territory which looked to the city as its centre probably did not extend for more than twenty miles to the south. The Edomites made their way without difficulty into the half-empty towns of the Negeb; and the Jews who were left could not hope to resist them, nor could they now retain any hegemony, such as Josiah had exercised, over central Israel. It was as much as they could do to live on peaceful terms with their neighbours, and avoid giving offence. For any attempt either to rebuild their walls or to re-establish their worship, they had not the energy nor the courage, nor, it may be surmised, the permission of Babylon. We learn, however, that in spite of the disorganization of the country after Gedaliah's assassination, sacrifice could still be offered;¹ with the site of the Temple still open, the gradual return of fugitives to their old homes, and a government which was averse to harsh and tyrannical measures, some sort of religious life went on; and North and South, no longer with a political boundary between them, could approach one another with a common, though, from a Deuteronomic standpoint, a far from satisfactory faith.

¹ Jer. xli. 5.



THE ISLAND OF ELEPHANTINE (JEB), just below the First Cataract on the Nile

Such, then, was the condition of the Jewish world in the first generation of the exile. The centre of gravity had shifted, never completely to return, to the Dispersion. Even now the Jews spoke of the Dispersion as if it embraced 'all the lands'. It may well have been that long before the last agony of Jerusalem, Jews had travelled in many directions and had shown themselves unwilling to come back. But the strength of the Dispersion lay in two centres. Of these, the East (Babylon) was the home of that mingled conservatism and innovation in religious faith which produced a passionate devotion to the ever-developing code of ritual and cultus; the South-west (Egypt) saw that union of adherence to an older form of faith with susceptibility to local influence, which produced the most complete type of the movement known to later ages as Hellenistic Judaism.

For the birthplace of what we mean by Judaism we must look, then, to Babylon. What Judaism was, at least in its earlier stages, the pages of this book must attempt to reveal. But we may here sum up its controlling factors; these were—exclusiveness, hope, and piety. The element of exclusiveness will be quite intelligible. It was, indeed, indispensable, if the Jews were to avoid absorption. Either they must keep distinct, or they would cease to be. They had the means to accomplish this distinctness in their religious practices and their law; and later, when they became more deeply interested in what was happening in Palestine, they felt the necessity of it for the Jews who were living there. Their very faith in Jahveh was something which their neighbours could not possess. They were bound, by the very conditions of their life and their ideals, to keep themselves to themselves.

With their faith grew their hope. This hope, as far as they learnt it from Ezekiel, was no concrete expectation. It did not point them to an actual return, but to a sort of far-off divine event; it was the dream of an ideal State far too glorious to be prepared for by practical considerations of transport and commissariat. Even with Ezekiel, who developed it in striking detail, it was apocalyptic; although Ezekiel's picture of the future constitution of the State lacked the figure, more or less constant yet ever changing in later apocalyptic writings, of the Davidic Messiah.

Second Isaiah bade his countrymen prepare for the immediate fulfilment of the dream; but he passed beyond the project of a re-peopled Judah, to the vision of a recreated world.¹

What we have named as the third factor, piety, needs a little more analysis. The piety of Judaism was a new thing in Israel and in the world. It was made up of dependence, obedience, and confidence, the object of each being, of course, Jahveh. These lessons had all been taught to Israel by the prophets; taught to Israel as a nation, but only learnt by Israel as a community, and therefore transformed in the learning. It has often been said that the exile revealed the individual, and that in the Psalms the needs and hopes of the individual find perfect expression. This is a mistake. Doubtless a reader interested in individual religion can so understand them; but what the exile revealed was the community as a spiritual unit, as distinct from a political unit, the nation. Dependence on Jahveh was a different thing in Babylon from what it could ever have been previously in Palestine. Of no account to others, strangers and sojourners, without the rights of a citizen or the boast of a soldier, learning for the first time in history the meaning of the Ghetto, the Jews were thrown back on God. They were poor, but they were God's poor. They discovered now, as neither the Red Sea nor Jericho had taught their fathers, that for all they needed, they must look to Jahveh alone. They did not look in vain. He was the Lord of holy and humble men of heart; all their fresh springs were in him.

And Jahveh demanded their obedience. He had demanded this before (Mic. vi. 8). Honesty and kindliness, as all the prophets had told them, were of infinitely greater importance than sacrifices. But Jahveh's demand was not now quite the same. True, sacrifices were out of the question. But, as the exile had shown them, Jahveh had given them an instruction.²

¹ It was a Jew, too, who saw as the culmination of his vision of the last things, the new Jerusalem coming out of heaven as a bride adorned for her husband. The hope of a return has never been forgotten; 'Next year', as the Jews say at the Passover each spring, 'next year at Jerusalem'. And, with whatever changes and modifications, Zion is fulfilling these hopes before our eyes.

² Such is the meaning of the word *Torah*, commonly translated 'law'. See p. 50.

This included directions of all kinds, some of them rational enough, while of others the Jew only knew that they had to be obeyed. He could not be too careful. It was always safer to err on the right side. The more he did to carry out the precepts, the stronger the assurance he had of Jahveh's favour. Hence, he was continually refining on the law he had. He might often fall short and sin, deliberately or quite unintentionally. But he could find forgiveness. The broken and contrite heart, crushed and 'beaten small' (such is the meaning of the word), would be accepted. We thus have the paradox of spiritual religion living side by side with sheer legalism. The Jew did not feel the contradiction. He could anticipate the commands of the Sermon on the Mount as naturally as he could multiply the taboos of 'touch not, taste not, handle not'. It was enough that he was doing the bidding of Jahveh.

For he knew that Israel was Jahveh's people, his 'chosen'. With Israel Jahveh had made his unalterable covenant. And all Jahveh's grace was mediated by this covenant-community to its members. Jahveh reigned on high, and Israel could dwell secure. Not all the raging of the heathen could endanger Jahveh's people. In a later century, the Stoic could talk about being the equal of kings and finding happiness on the rack. Israel, though a people robbed and spoiled, and driven in hours of persecution into dens and caves of the earth, preserved in its narrow circle a faith despised by all the nations that trod it down, and knew itself to be the very apple of Jahveh's eye.

It would be too much to say that all these elements were present in Judaism in every age. We seldom find more than a few of them together at the same time. The attacks, or the neglect, of the heathen were too potent for their complete manifestation. Sometimes, and oftener than is generally recognized, the Jews yielded, flung aside their law, and devoted their energies to copying their neighbours. Sometimes resistance rose into defiance, and prayers to God were drowned in curses shrieked against His enemies. But in the Psalter Jewish piety has achieved the supreme expression for the world's devotion. In the songs of Elizabeth, Zacharias, and Mary, it has heralded the birth of the Messiah-Saviour, and, in the burning words of

Paul and John, it has lost itself to find itself again. The period which we are to study can only be understood if we remember that what we have described as Judaism was a force which in many forms and fashions was shaping the aspirations of priest and prophet, ruler and thinker, merchant and craftsman, from the days when the long train of captives settled down beside the waters of Babylon.

B. RECONSTRUCTION OF THE HISTORY

Reference has already been made to the condition of Palestine during the exile. The country was under-populated, but it was by no means lying waste. There were perhaps 150,000 inhabitants; for the deportation was partly balanced by the number of fugitives who would gradually return (cf. Jer. xl, 12). On the other hand, allowance must also be made for foreigners who would find their way into Northern Palestine, and even Judah; for Judah was always attractive to the semi-nomads on the borders of the desert. Jews again might migrate elsewhere; it is probable that Johanan's was not the only migration into Egypt. Life in the country was certainly not alluring. There is indeed no reason to suppose that the Babylonian authorities were severe; but many farms must have been lying out of cultivation; perhaps wild beasts were on the increase (cf. 2 Kings xvii. 26); all the more vigorous elements in the population had been removed; the remnant was dispirited and feeble; there was no foreign trade and probably little beyond half-hearted agriculture. The Temple-site remained, with its sacrifices; but the local shrines were gone, for better or worse.

Yet old beliefs and traditions died hard. These were not very dissimilar to those of the non-Jews surrounding Palestine. Even in the past, when the kingdom had been standing, and the court worship was officially practised, Israelite religion was hardly to be distinguished from its neighbours by its ritual laws; what did distinguish it was the connexion of these practices with Jahveh, and the demands of the prophets for an 'old-fashioned righteousness', with which traditional practices and customs had nothing to do. With the Temple services and priesthood at an end, the assimilation between the different sections of the population in Palestine would be comparatively simple; and it was natural that intermarriage between Jews and foreigners, supported by the example of some of the greatest names in Israelite history, should take place on a large scale, in a country where the racial elements were increasingly mixed. At the same time,

it was impossible for the Jews in Palestine to forget that they were not the only representatives of their race. Feeble as they might be, they must have been in some sort of contact with their neighbours of the 'Golah' or captivity (a term which is applied to the Jews in all foreign countries, and not in Babylon alone), to gain courage from their prosperity, assistance from their gifts, and confidence and coherence, in however hesitating a fashion, from their hopes of ultimate return.

It will now be convenient to survey briefly the history of the two empires in whose power lay, during our period, the fortunes of the scattered nation. Nebuchadnezzar remained on the throne of Babylon till 562, twenty-five years after the fall of Jerusalem. Though not uniformly successful abroad (he could not reduce Tyre, and he could only occupy portions of the Egyptian delta, cf. Ezek. xxix. 17 ff.), his position in his own country was unshaken, though he had to watch the rising influence of his old allies and rivals the Medes, and to see the occupation of Elam by the young and vigorous Persians. His son-in-law Neriglissar reigned five years, and his grandson another year; and in 556 Nabonidus, brought to the throne from Harran, became king. He was chiefly interested (as, we should gather from his inscriptions, was Nebuchadnezzar himself) in restoring ancient shrines. From the time of his accession, Cyrus, the king of Anshan, really occupies the scene. A recently discovered text speaks of an alliance between Nabonidus and Cyrus against Astyages the Mede in 555; in 550 Astyages was decisively beaten; in 546 Cyrus took Sardis and destroyed the powerful Lydian kingdom of Croesus in Asia Minor. In the next year he secured his ascendancy over Arabia, and in 539, through treachery and the general weariness of the rule of Nabonidus, he gained possession of Babylon. Cyrus lived for another eight or nine years, and, in opposition to the traditions of Assyrian and Babylonian conquerors, showed all possible respect to the various nationalities under his sceptre. With a 'liberalism' rare enough in antiquity, he announced himself in Babylon as a servant of Marduk, and from his official language it would be easy for a pious and enthusiastic Jew to think of him as a chosen instrument of Jahveh.

To pass from Babylon to Persia is to pass from mist into the light of a clear sky. The spade of the archaeologist has given us the temples, the statues, the literature, and the commercial documents of Mesopotamia; we know the story, with tantalizing gaps, of campaigns and dynasties. But in the pages of Herodotus and Thucydides we meet the Persian men. To most readers of history, the mention of Persia will first suggest Marathon and Salamis, the disgrace of an effete Oriental power whose ponderous and swollen hosts were scattered by the young light-hearted Greeks. But though, within two generations after Cyrus' conquest of Babylon, the Persian armies were driven from the fields of Attica, and the fleet from her waters, Persia remained for a century and a half the vast empire which the Greeks successively feared, cajoled, flattered, and obeyed. And the Greeks, our best and almost our only authorities, found something to admire in Persians whom they knew; love of truth, simplicity of worship, and a certain admiration for Hellenic freedom; and they could quote, on occasion, some very frank criticisms from Persian lips on their own political morality.

The Persian satraps in the near East seem to have been no better and no worse than the Greek politicians and adventurers they met, and some of them were almost as clever. We know them fairly well, Zopyrus, Pharnabazus, Megabyzus, and the rest; but we know too their cruelty, treachery, and passion;¹ and the Greek verdict on Persia was as true as it was laconic, that in the country of the great king 'all are slaves except one'. Of the Persian satraps who came in contact with the Jews we know nothing. They would be less perplexed by their subjects than were their colleagues farther west. There were elements in Jewish religious life to rouse their suspicion; but, in comparison with the Greek, the post-exilic Jew cared nothing for political intrigue, and, as far as history tells us, the governors often had little to do save to keep the king's peace and raise what revenue they could from struggling farms and languishing trade.

Cyrus was followed by Cambyzes (529), who set himself to the task of reducing Egypt. Here he was completely successful;

¹ See Herodotus iii. 35, 36; vi. 19, 106.



A Persian Horseman of to-day.

Herodotus, a contemporary of Nehemiah, notes that all Persians were taught to ride and to tell the truth •

Reconstruction of the History

but in his absence a widespread movement of rebellion broke out in Asia. In his rage and chagrin he put an end to his life. In the year after his suicide, however, Darius, the son of a Persian noble, Hystaspes, prevented what might easily have been chaos in the still young empire, and in a long reign of thirty-seven years (522-486) he was the real consolidator of the realm. He was succeeded by Xerxes (Ahasuerus). Western readers are acquainted with these two kings chiefly in connexion with their expeditions against Greece. But though the glories of Marathon and Salamis will never grow old, they left Persia still, in the eyes of the Greeks themselves, the empire of the 'great king', and they probably made no impression at all on the Jews and the other Asiatic subject races. Xerxes' successor, Artaxerxes I (Longimanus, or 'of the long hand') reigned from 464 to 424. Of the story of Persia under the remaining kings (Darius II, Nothus or 'Bastard', 424; Artaxerxes II, Mnemon or 'The Mindful', 404; Artaxerxes III, Ochus, 359) little is known save from Greek sources.

Though not a single strong character is found among these kings, the government was on the whole stable and well organized, and the satraps or provincial authorities quite as loyal as could have been expected. In 407, however, Egypt revolted; and the attempt of Cyrus the king's brother, rendered famous by Xenophon and his ten thousand (397), though suppressed by Artaxerxes, showed, at least to the observant Greeks, the elements of weakness in the gigantic empire. Greece, however, was too much occupied with her own affairs to take advantage of the discovery till 333, when Alexander of Macedon set himself to invade the East. Darius III, known as Codomannus, had succeeded Artaxerxes III in 336; he was no match for his impetuous foe, and in a few years, after Alexander had seated himself as another 'great king' in Persepolis, Greek influence had begun to penetrate wherever Persia had governed. It affected and went far to unify all the motley nations whom it touched, with a thoroughness that Persia had never attained or desired. Among these nations were the Jews, found by this time throughout the near East.

We must now return to Cyrus of Anshan. His accession in



THE BEHISTUN MONUMENT

Carved by the order of Darius on an almost inaccessible rock between Babylon and Ecbatana. Darius stands in front of a line of captive satraps, in the attitude of adoration to the symbol of Ahura-mazda

Babylon gave the Jews the opportunity to regain, if not their political independence, at least their social and religious life. This did not mean that any large number of Jews returned from Babylon to Palestine. Whether Cyrus would have permitted this, we cannot tell; but it is doubtful if many of the Jews (save the poorer members of the community) would have been anxious to leave prosperous and comfortable homes for an adventure, however patriotic, in an outlying and unsettled province of the empire. Even to-day, the wealthy Jew in London or New York is more ready to send his money to Palestine for the assistance of his needier compatriots, than to remove there himself.¹

Moreover, if there had been a considerable company of returning exiles, our sources for subsequent events in Palestine must have referred to its presence there. As a matter of fact, such references do not exist. What really happened was the appointment by Cyrus, a few months after he came to power, of a Jew named Sheshbazzar to the governorship of Judaea. Sheshbazzar may have been the same as Shenazzar (1 Chron. iii. 18) the son of Jeconiah and the uncle of Zerubbabel. In any case, he would be (in spite of his Babylonian name) a Jew. Cyrus would hardly have appointed a foreigner to restore the Jewish worship in Palestine or to take back the sacred vessels. Sheshbazzar would naturally provide himself with an escort of his own countrymen, and, armed with the royal firman, he departed for the West.

Of his further history we know nothing; but later on we hear of Zerubbabel, a Jewish prince, the grandson of Jeconiah (who had been released from prison by Evil-Merodach). He is installed as governor or 'pasha', and at his side is the high-priest, Joshua, the first whom we know to have borne this precise title in Jerusalem. These two men recognized as their task the rebuilding of the Temple. One might have expected that the Jews on the spot would have welcomed their leadership. But it is clear from the contemporary prophets that they had to face a good deal of opposition. The Jews had learnt to

¹ The importance of the 'first return', as related in Ezra i-iii, is probably much exaggerated. See below, pp. 160 ff.



ALEXANDER AND DARIUS III AT THE BATTLE OF ISSUS

From a wall-painting at Pompeii

get on without a Temple. The wealthier classes were more anxious to make things comfortable for themselves; and when the hopes of snatching some political independence in the troubled waters at the beginning of the reign of Darius had died away, there was no energy left for temple-building. When, however, Zerubbabel appeared, and with him Joshua, the opportunity was seized by two prophets, Haggai and Zechariah, to revive the half-forgotten scheme. The project succeeded; and in spite of some obscure intrigues and rivalries, the Temple was finished in 516 B. C.

Haggai and Zechariah (our only contemporary authorities) give us no hints of Persian official opposition. Such opposition was not perhaps to be expected; but there is also no hint of any goodwill between Persians and Jews. Further, we do not know anything of the attitude of the other inhabitants of Palestine to the Jewish proceedings. The Temple would not be popular, as it would tend to exalt the Jewish community above its neighbours; but it could not be regarded in itself as a political menace. To rebuild the Temple was not to refortify the city. Indeed, attempts were made at other times, and quite possibly under Zerubbabel, by the inhabitants of central Palestine, to join in the rebuilding.¹ But it was otherwise when a plan was started for rebuilding the walls (Ezra iv. 7 ff., see p. 208). This caused a great deal of local excitement. Complaints were made to the Persian court. The king decided that authority had never been given for any political reconstruction. The plan was forcibly brought to an end, and the Jews had to confine themselves to their Temple and their worship.

For the next half-century and more, we have no direct information. All we can do is to ask what are the changes

¹ These attempts are the more noteworthy because there was already in central Palestine the great religious centre of Shechem; and if the inhabitants of central Palestine preserved (as they most probably did) any continuity with the old Northern Kingdom of Israel, they might well have been anxious to make this the religious centre of the whole country. When, nearly two centuries later, the Samaritan Schism took place, memories of its ancient glories would naturally be strong, and they reappear in the later Samaritan literature (see Gaster, *The Samaritans*); but in our period the stricter Jews seem much more afraid of Samaritan co-operation in Jerusalem than of the rivalry of the Samaritans in their own territory.

required by the position in which we find ourselves when we can turn to our next authority, the memoirs of Nehemiah in 445 and subsequent years. At the same time it is probable that in this obscure period we must place the last nine chapters of Isaiah and the prophet whom we know as Malachi (see pp. 167, 177). At political developments we can only guess; presumably, the provincial governors were no longer native but Persian. But we cannot help asking what was the religious law obeyed by the community which worshipped in the new Temple, and what were the religious hopes and ideals after the Temple had arisen and the city walls had been flung down. Did the priests in Jerusalem carry on the principles of the reforms of Josiah? Some rubric they must have felt to be necessary, and they would naturally look for it among the scholars and students of Babylon. Thus the existence of the Temple would mean the preservation of some ritual tradition. That the priests had their law of ritual cleanliness, even before the Temple was complete, is shown by Haggai, ch. ii (cf. p. 151); but at the close of the period, when Nehemiah arrived from Babylon, the country was very far from obeying the precepts of Deuteronomy.

Worse than this, the prophecies at the close of our book of Isaiah show that paganism of the most pronounced type was still flourishing. This does not mean that the law was not known or obeyed. Israel could 'limp' on two opinions, and serve Jahveh and other and quite different gods, from the days of Ahab (and long before) right on to the end of the fifth century. Nor can we conclude that idolatry was as rife as it had been before the exile. The excavations in Palestine appear to have disproved this. But it does mean that the monotheism of the prophet of the exile whom we call 'Second Isaiah' was very far from being popularly accepted, and that the old syncretism and the natural desire to get the best from all possible worships was still strong.

Such was the probable state of affairs when in the middle of the fifth century Nehemiah appeared on the scene. Nehemiah is one of the most striking and capable characters in the Old Testament, and we have from him the priceless gift of his

own memoirs—his diaries, we might almost say, kept during the two periods of his presence in Jerusalem. A high and trusted official at the court of Artaxerxes I, he was so affected by an eye-witness's account of the disorganization in Judah, which he received in 445, that he sought for permission to travel there himself. The king apparently not only granted this, but gave him the title of governor. He made up his mind, immediately after his arrival, if he had not done so before, that the first need of the desolate city was for its walls. At once he found himself in an extremely difficult position. His official title carried but little influence with it. Whatever weight he was to exercise had to come from his own character. The Jews on the spot showed no enthusiasm for his project. They were poor, dispirited, and disunited. Life in and around Jerusalem had gone on without fortifications for more than a century, and they had neither courage nor energy for the formidable task. Their neighbours, both on the north and the south of Judaea, were as strongly opposed as before to what might become a hostile military power in their midst, and they were quite ready to use their influence both with the more prominent of the Jews and with the Persians against the project. But Nehemiah was equal to every emergency. Determined yet shrewd, self-controlled yet with a dash of Oriental passion, pious and warm-hearted but uniformly cautious, he was a sort of Jewish Cromwell, ready to regard his greatest success as a crowning mercy, but careful to keep his powder dry. Unwilling or unable to presume on his official authority, he won over the poor by sympathy and generosity, the rich by appeals to their sense of public unselfishness; he organized his building operations on the basis of existing family connexions; and he outwitted his foreign enemies by a mixture of military tactics, patience, resolution, and, we are almost tempted to add, bluff.

The fortification did for Jerusalem what the long walls of Themistocles, built nearly forty years before, had done for Athens; and, having thus restored Jerusalem to the rank of a city, Nehemiah felt himself able to return to the Persian court. But walls cannot preserve the spirit by which a city

attains her true destiny. Long years in exile had now convinced the Babylonian Jews of the necessity for purity of race and obedience to the law. This was easy to secure in Babylon, but far from easy, even within the new walls, in Jerusalem. After an interval, Nehemiah returned, to find that the northern rivals had been accepted as members of the community, that the Levites, whose incomes had been withheld, had thrown up their sacred duties to find work elsewhere, that the sabbath was being neglected, markets being set up when field-work was not being done, and, worst of all, marriages were being contracted with the surrounding heathen. Nehemiah, determined on loyalty to the law—in the main, as it would appear, the provisions of Deuteronomy¹—and convinced that for Jerusalem to be independent meant to be separate, acted with a promptitude and a severity which he had not shown on his first term of office, and expelled, among the rest of his opponents, a priest who had married the daughter of his leading enemy of twelve years ago.

With this event, his memoirs come to an end. But it is not difficult to see the mark which his vigorous measures left on the community. For the future, however, Persian governors were appointed, as before. This meant further opportunities for intrigue, and about the year 410 the city was scandalized by the murder of Jeshua, the brother of the high-priest, at the instigation of the high-priest himself. Whereupon the Persian governor, a friend of the murdered Jeshua, defiled the Temple by entering the shrine, and laid a heavy tax upon the city (Jos., Antt. xi. 7). About the same time, the temple of the Jewish colony in Elephantine (see p. 226) was destroyed in an *émeute*, and the victims, after sending a fruitless petition for assistance to Jerusalem, sought help in a letter to Samaria.

Meanwhile, another movement of far greater influence was in preparation. After Nehemiah's restoration of the partial independence of the city, the Jewish community in Babylon felt that there was at last an opportunity for the establishment

¹ The stress laid in Deuteronomy on a single sanctuary would make its supporters the more suspicious of the Samaritans who, however friendly to the temple in Jerusalem, had their own religious associations in Central Palestine (see p. 233).

of the religious cultus, as they understood it, in its completeness. Ezra, one of the leading members of the guild of scribes or legal authorities, now appeared with a large following in Jerusalem.¹ He was an ecclesiastic, not a statesman, but like Nehemiah he was deeply impressed with the necessity of avoiding any intermarriages with the surrounding population and of maintaining the continuity, correctness, and opulence of the ministrations in the Temple. He had also another aim, to promulgate a new and enlarged edition of the law. A large part of Deuteronomy had long been out of date; the time-honoured insistence on humanitarian provisions and ideals of conduct was no longer considered necessary in the priestly schools. What was necessary was a punctilious emphasis on the preservation of holiness in the service of the altar, the national festivals, and the general life of the people. Ezra's demands went further than Nehemiah's, but he had the foundation of Nehemiah on which to build. He had no military or police force to which he could appeal, but he won over the opinion of the larger part of the community to his side. His ideal of racial purity was secured by the adoption of thorough-going measures which resulted in the divorce of some hundreds of foreign wives; the community voluntarily undertook to pay more liberal contributions to the support of the Temple clergy, as we may now call them; the scale of the Temple sacrifices was raised, and a solemn assembly was held, at which the whole body of law was read and a solemn league and covenant formed to ensure its observance.

The new material which Ezra thus brought before the people is known as the Priests' Code (see p. 59). It forms the larger portion of the legal section of the Pentateuch. Subsequently the older codes, the Book of the Covenant, Deuteronomy, and the Holiness Code, were embedded in it. Along with it went a sketch of the early history of Israel, containing the traditions which the priestly school regarded as of most importance for

¹ The arrangement of our present book of Ezra-Nehemiah suggests that Ezra preceded Nehemiah's arrival in the city, and managed to carry out his reforms during Nehemiah's term of office. The reasons for doubting this are given on p. 198. The actual date of Ezra's journey to Jerusalem is uncertain, but for the reasons for placing it early in the fourth century, see p. 236.



The Vale of Shechem from the West



A Group of Samaritans



Samaritan Place of Sacrifice

establishing the authority of the law and of the view of Jahveh's relation to Israel on which the law rested. To this were at some time added the earlier bodies of tradition known to-day as the Jahvistic and the Elohist documents (see p. 59).

Ezra's establishment of the law was the first great triumph of Judaism. What Ezekiel had dreamt of was now carried out with a fullness which Ezekiel had never envisaged. But the piety which had longed for the restoration of the sacrifices on the hallowed spot in Jerusalem had also learnt to maintain itself without the help of an altar. Thus, after Ezra, one part of the Jewish people gave itself up, with a zest hitherto unknown, to obedience to the ritual law; another, in Palestine as well as in Babylon, knew that Jahveh could be approached most surely in other ways, and that sins for which sacrifice could not atone might gain forgiveness through repentance and contrition.

Ezra's triumph had another result. It meant a very considerable increase in taxation. We do not know the amount of tribute which the Persian government exacted from time to time; but, to support the clergy and meet the greatly enlarged demands of the Temple ritual, tithes, first-fruits, the first-born of animals, the redemption of first-born children, wood, and the Temple third of a shekel, later half a shekel (Neh. x. 32-7), were demanded, but went far to impoverish an already burdened community, and to embitter discontent at any real or fancied oppression.

This development falls outside the compass of the present volume. But the means taken by Ezra to secure purity of marriage were soon to have a very noteworthy effect. Nehemiah's stern treatment of the intrusive foreigners had not been forgotten. But it was widely unpopular, and after his departure there had been nothing except sentiment to prevent intermarriages. Such intermarriages still took place on a large scale, but the consciousness of distinctness between Jerusalem and the community in central Palestine at Samaria was growing. It received a great impetus from the drastic steps taken at the instance of Ezra, and at last, a hundred years after Nehemiah's second term of office in Jerusalem, the decisive breach occurred.¹

¹ For the reasons for placing the Samaritan Schism here, and not, as is more frequently done, in the time of Nehemiah himself, see pp. 237 f..

The governor of Samaria under Darius III, according to Josephus, was named Sanballat (perhaps a descendant of Nehemiah's enemy) whose daughter was actually given in marriage to Manasseh the brother of the Jewish high-priest. The leaders at Jerusalem demanded, in the spirit of Ezra, that the marriage should be annulled; but instead of this, Manasseh accepted the offer of his father-in-law to build a temple for him on Mount Gerizim, the old Samaritan sanctuary, and to obtain his appointment as high-priest there. The fact that Manasseh, migrating to Samaria, was accompanied by a large number of priests, Levites, and others (if we may believe Josephus at this point), shows how divided was opinion in Jerusalem, even two generations after Ezra. But the temple was built; Alexander, who had now become the ruler of the Persian empire (332), confirmed Manasseh in the high-priesthood; and the Samaritan community, equipped with the now completed Pentateuch, began its existence as a distinct and independent church.

The Samaritans have been not unnaturally the mark of persistent and virulent hatred from the Jews—a hatred which they have not been backward to return. But the supreme position which they assigned to the Pentateuch (unlike the Jews, they have never added other writings as sacred scripture to the five books of Moses) makes one thing at least clear, namely, that they did not form, as Josephus suggests, a sort of religious cave of Adullam, a hot-bed of superstitions for those who found the Puritanism of Jerusalem too exacting. They could submit from time to time later on to the demands of their Greek rulers, as most of the Jews were on occasion willing to do; but their zeal for the law, and for the purity of their own race, grew to be as enthusiastic as that of the Jews themselves. The Pentateuchal sacrifices came to an end in Jerusalem after the great revolt in A.D. 70; and they seem even to-day quite unlikely to be revived on their ancient site; but they have been offered continuously, though sadly attenuated in splendour and number, on Mount Gerizim, to the present time.

C. THE SECOND AGE OF PROPHECY

The fall of Jerusalem brought a new spirit into prophecy. That remarkable movement, which has nothing that can properly be called analogous to it in any other religion or country, had sprung up and flourished as the expression of the best Hebrew religious patriotism. It is possible that the practice of religious ecstasy, like that of the Moslem dervishes, was well known in Canaan before the entrance of the Israelites under Joshua; it is possible also that the early Hebrew prophets were wont to manifest an excitement hardly to be distinguished in its externals from the Canaanite displays.¹ But Israelite prophecy, like all else distinctively Israelite, was penetrated by devotion to Jahveh, and to Israel, the nation, as being Jahveh's special sphere of interest. All the prophets introduced their oracles with 'Thus hath Jahveh said', and we cannot doubt that they believed their own words.

After the establishment of the kingdom we find prophets, like priests, at least on certain occasions, in an official or subsidized position.² Their patriotic zeal might then easily become mere chauvinism. 'Go up to Ramoth-Gilead and prosper.' It might, however, take another line. For if the prophets came to feel that Jahveh was something much more than a 'tribal god' with a purpose bound up with the mere existence and good fortunes of his nation, and that he demanded justice and mercy, and reverence to his own exalted and moral character, patriotism would find its utterance in very different tones. In both cases the prophet might pass through genuine psychic experiences, for ecstasy in its varying degrees knows nothing of truth or falsehood of belief, of orthodoxy or heterodoxy. In both cases the prophet's

¹ Compare 1 Sam. x. 10 ff., 1 Kings xviii. 28. Lord Curzon has described, in a paper entitled 'The Drums of Kairwan', a Moslem religious dance which he witnessed in Tunis, which offers a curious parallel to the performance on Mount Carmel.

² 1 Kings xviii. 19. Cf. also the incident of Hananiah's prediction of the return of the exiles, in Jer. xxviii.

sympathizers would imagine him inspired by the spirit of Jahveh, and his opponents would call him simply mad. The former class, the chauvinists, have left nothing behind them except the suspicion and contempt of their rivals, though it was no light thing to have maintained their faith, as they undoubtedly did, in Jahveh's support and Israel's survival in circumstances where a modern 'huzza-patriot' or jingo would certainly have been silent. But the latter, convinced that the fate of a nation is bound up with its attitude to a divine law of morality, have left words which, for all their obscurity, posterity has refused to allow to perish. These men, a minority—often an almost powerless minority—in their own days, are for us the only men who count as prophets at all.

When Israel ceased to be a nation the task of prophecy might have seemed to be at an end. There were no more kings to go up and take Ramoth-Gilead, nor any chance of breaking the yoke of Nebuchadnezzar. The conditions were against prophecy, both in Babylon and Palestine, and of course still more so in Egypt. But in the first years of exile there was living among the Jews in Mesopotamia one whose claim to the title of prophet was indisputable. Ezekiel was certain that Jahveh had given him a message for the community, and, while Jerusalem was still standing, for the nation. That message was one of doom, and it was accompanied by supernatural experiences and impulses to various symbolic actions. These all marked him out as the true successor to Isaiah and Jeremiah. To us these notes are not so convincing ; they might well be a result of auto-suggestion. Ezekiel knew what prophecy had meant for his predecessors ; he was full of the thought, doubtless, that he too might be a prophet. Whether he expected a 'call' or not, it was received ; in some respects it was strikingly like Isaiah's, and his subsequent messages contain passages and start from reflections that remind us strongly of Jeremiah.

On the other hand, no one could read Ezekiel and suppose that he was simply repeating what he had heard or read. His visions, his impulses to weird and often repellent symbolisms, and his outbursts of rage or terror were neither simulated nor copied. Like Jeremiah, he found his prophetic calling

a burden and a distress. But he could not cast it off. And if he often started from what might be called the commonplaces of his predecessors, he worked them out with an imaginative passion that was entirely his own. His details are sometimes picturesque, sometimes childish; his figures are now elevated and tragic, reminding the reader of Dante or William Blake; at other times, grotesque and bizarre. But all the while he is laying the foundations of a new prophecy, interpreting the true destiny of the nation now so miserably, as it seemed, coming to an end; asserting the majesty of a God who now had no country that He could call His own; working out a sequence of events which would lead to restoration and piety; and adapting the old religion of a nation to the needs of what was now to become, if it were to survive at all, a church.

Till the actual downfall of the city, indeed, Ezekiel's horizon was bounded by its destruction, which he, like Jeremiah, saw to be inevitable. But when the blow fell, his tone changed; he set himself to his second and more original task. Other prophets had spoken, vaguely enough, of exile and return, but the great bulk of their messages had consisted in the simpler statement, 'If you do not repent, your city will be destroyed'. Well, they had not repented, and the city had been destroyed. It was for the prophet now living in exile to see what was to come next. For the city's fall could not be the end. It was rather a new beginning, not the death but the birth of the real Israel. In the prophecies that follow his reception of the news, Ezekiel works out the actual steps by which the true restoration, the new birth of the nation, will be accomplished. Not satisfied with demanding repentance or promising the spirit of Jahveh, he develops a kind of psychology of conversion; and, as if to show that no form of prophetic activity is alien to him, he pronounces a series of woes on the nations, and predicts a final catastrophe which is wholly apocalyptic.

If we had only his first thirty-nine chapters we should regard him as entirely in the prophetic succession, taking his own line, facing his own problems, but moving in the familiar orbit. And so he has been regarded by one of the keenest and most original of modern critics, Hölscher. Regarding the chapters still to be

considered, and a good deal of what has gone before, as erroneously attributed to Ezekiel, Hölscher sees in him a fiery and ecstatic follower of Isaiah and Jeremiah.¹ He was this: but he was much more. We are told that he belonged by birth to the Jerusalem priesthood. There is but little in his work hitherto to suggest either a sacerdotal outlook or sacerdotal sympathies. He does not, like Jeremiah the 'country priest', attack the institution of sacrifice, but, like the courtly Isaiah, he neglects it altogether as a means to salvation. The book closes, however, with a section which reminds us, not of a canonical prophet, but of Deuteronomy. Purporting to give a long and careful report of a vision, he describes the Temple, the altar, the sacrifices, and the priesthood as they are to be in the future. Here we have, as in Deuteronomy, a distinct interest in the ritual law for its own sake, shot through, as in Deuteronomy, with the prophetic zeal for purity, order, and civic harmony and well-being, and controlled by an enthusiasm for ceremonial holiness, as Deuteronomy is controlled by enthusiasm for loyalty to 'Jahvism'.² A large part of this section reads like 'Torah'; it is almost indistinguishable, for example, from the second half of Leviticus (see p. 59). It was never accepted by the Jews as Mosaic in origin or regarded as authoritative. It remained in the prophetic canon, and was looked on as inspired, but not with the inspiration possessed by the books of Moses. Yet its significance can hardly be exaggerated. It marks the interest in the study of the law, expanding, elaborating, and refining it, which was henceforward to be the characteristic of the Babylonian community. It marks also the alliance between the priestly and the prophetic ideals, first struck in Deuteronomy, which, though protested against by Jeremiah, was to be the mark of Judaism, the religion of Israel after the exile. Ezekiel thus takes his place at the very centre of the religion of the Old Testament, the most catholic of all the outstanding Old Testament figures. There is not a protest in the Old Testament which he does not echo, not a hope with which he does not

¹ Hölscher leaves to the 'genuine' Ezekiel only 170 verses out of 1,273.

² We may use this term for the priests' desire for a worship of Jahveh uncontaminated by the rites of the Baals, as well as for the prophetic desire for personal obedience to the moral law of Jahveh. Deuteronomy contains both.

sympathize, not an ideal which he does not enforce. At once preacher and ritualist, poet and legislator, theologian and visionary, schoolman and dreamer, he is the epitome of the 'old covenant'. If we miss the sublime directness of Isaiah, or the searching and terrible introspection of Jeremiah, we owe to Ezekiel the mingling of the different streams of religious devotion which formed the piety of later centuries, and though explicit reference to him is not to be found in the Gospels, he has given us the vision of the Holy City whose name is 'Jahveh is there', which was seen once more on Patmos.

Two other works have come down to us from the exile in Babylon; one of them, as it would appear, from some period not far removed from Ezekiel's latest vision, and the other just before the conquest of Cyrus. The first is a sequence of four poems, generally known, from their subject, as the 'Servant Songs'.¹ Their author is unknown; there is indeed nothing in these Songs to show either where or when he lived. But their presence in the prophetic canon, wedged in between a number of poems which were certainly written in Babylon before the Persian conquest, suggests that they were at least regarded as exilic. If we assume this, we shall find that they cast a very vivid light on the experiences of the Jews in Babylon. But they manifest the transcendence of purely temporal limitations that we are conscious of in a chorus of Aeschylus or in Shakespeare's sonnets. They read like four scenes from the inner life of an actual character, suggesting quite naturally the question of the Ethiopian eunuch to Philip, 'Of whom doth the prophet speak, of himself or of another?' But as the poet gazed at his hero, it seems as if he saw in him a tragedy and a passion 'more than any man's'; as if he beheld with anointed eyes the unique sufferer, the ideal Servant and Saviour of mankind.

The first three of the poems are quite short, only a few lines apiece; but the art of the poet is so exquisite that every line stands out clear and distinct. The fourth is made up of

¹ These are usually regarded as part of the work of 'Second Isaiah', i. e. Is. chh. xl-lv; for the discussion of the reasons for regarding them as independent, see p. 104. The four poems are found in Is. xlii. 1-4, xlix. 1-5, l. 4-9, lii. 13-14, 12.

five brief but poignant strophes. Many a stanza from the *In Memoriam* is longer; yet these fifteen verses accomplish the achievement of the greatest works of art; 'they show us intolerable things, and leave us with a profound sense of peace'. In the first poem the hero, as if he were a prophet, describes his call. But he is not a prophet. He is not 'to strive or cry or to raise his voice in the open'. He is to be gentleness and tenderness itself; but he has been chosen and inspired by Jahveh, and for no less an end than to teach Jahveh's way of life, not only to Israel, but to the whole world. The whole poem is put into the mouth of Jahveh, as if the Servant is repeating the words which first summoned him to his tremendous task.

In the second poem, the Servant has met with disappointment and disillusion; but he is recalled to the original scope of the divine purpose for him. In the third, he is the perfect disciple, who can teach all the lore of Jahveh because he has first learnt it himself—only to find gross bodily ill-usage as his reward. But he refuses to yield, and for once his mood hardens and he denounces his persecutors. Yet only for once; the mood passes, and in the fourth poem we can see 'the very pulse of the machine'. The tragedy has taken place—despised and tortured, the sufferer has fallen beneath the burden, and is dead. In the first strophe, Jahveh himself announces the transition from the almost inconceivable humiliation to triumph. In the second, the spectators—the persecutors, as it would seem—with a cry of surprise at what they now discover, describe the horror of the impression made on them by the 'smitten leper'. In the third, they see his sufferings to be the consequences of their own sin. The sin was theirs, and it was 'loaded' upon him. In the fourth strophe, the poet speaks in his own person, telling of the actual fate of the sufferer, his unresisting meekness, his execution, and his burial with criminals. In the fifth, in words in which he passes from his own recital to the vindication of the Servant by Jahveh, he tells of the Servant's rising from the grave, the atoning result of his agony, the acquittal and pardon of his persecutors, and his own triumph and glory.

Who was the sufferer? Every one may conjecture; none

can tell. The poet may have idealized some individual he had heard of or even known. Jews have naturally imagined him to be a figure of the suffering nation of Israel; Christians have as naturally seen in him the crucified Messiah. With the gospel story there are indeed coincidences as striking as may be found in Ps. xxii; but the despised and loathsome victim of leprosy does not suit the divine hero of the evangelists. We cannot call the poems a prophecy of Jesus in the ordinary sense of the term. Yet in a deeper sense they are a prophecy—perhaps the profoundest prophecy in the Old Testament. For they are at once a foretelling and a ‘forth-telling’. They speak of the bitterest pain and degradation, which in later centuries was seen to be the meaning of the cross, borne willingly, deliberately, and without a murmur, to lift the guilt from the shoulders of those who inflicted the horror. Could this be the law of suffering, of sin, and of deliverance? Men pondered over the riddle in vain, until, when they looked at the cross of Jesus, they saw how the story of Calvary and the song of the suffering Servant explained each other.

The unknown poet found no imitators, and the truth which he had reached finds hardly an echo in subsequent literature; until much later the belief began to spread, that the blood of the martyrs might sometimes atone for the sins of mankind.¹ But this lies outside our field, and, however we interpret it, it falls far short of the magnificent intuition of our poet. One man, however, would appear to have owed his inspiration to the songs, at least in part, though he caught only a breath of his master’s spirit. This was the prophet who is known as ‘Second Isaiah’. He was penetrated by the thought of a sufferer, who had been singled out by Jahveh as his servant, and who was to be lifted above his sufferings into glory and peace. But who could this be save Israel itself, now in the degradation of exile, but already forgiven for the past and soon to be restored to Palestine? Less than twenty years after Ezekiel’s latest vision it became plain that Babylon would have to reckon with a new and relentless foe. Cyrus was not a wild

¹ This is hinted at in 2 Macc. vii. 38 and more clearly in 4 Macc. xvii. 22, and reappears in Rabbinic literature.

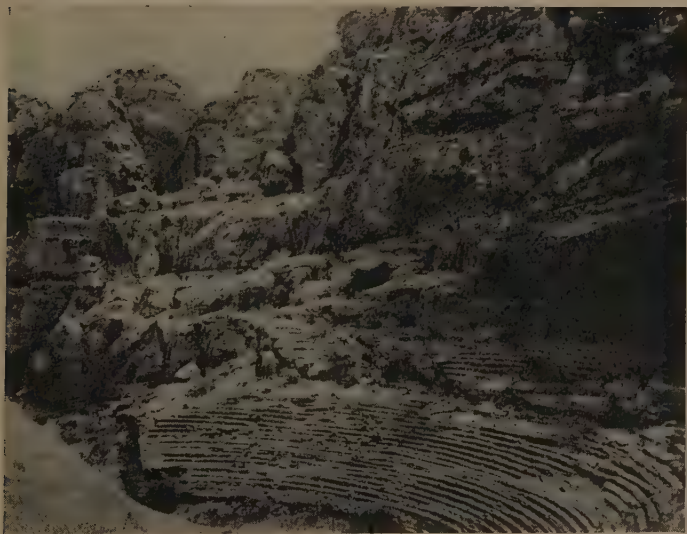
and devastating 'scourge of God'; he was steadily pursuing a plan that would leave Babylon, without an ally, at his mercy; and while he put down kings from their seats, he had no quarrel with the religion or the social well-being of their subjects. When at last the hour came for him to strike at Babylon, would not his triumph bring the release of the captives, the vindication by Jahveh of his long-suffering and faithful servants? The return across the desert would repeat the wonders of the exodus from Egypt. If the sea had been cleft to make a way for the fathers, the desert would leap into fruitfulness for the children.

There was no thought of repentance in all this; the people's sufferings had more than atoned for their sins; nor was there a thought of blessing for the Gentiles; the rôle of the Gentiles was to assist the returning hosts, and recognize the might of their God. One thing only was necessary for the exiles; that they should throw off their lethargy, forget their despairing thoughts, and be ready when the moment came which was to show them that Jahveh was indeed righteous, and that he fulfilled all his promises. That moment was already fast drawing near. The prophet speaks as if the tramp of Cyrus' legions could already be heard as they advanced across the mountains. He rises to a sustained exaltation rarely heard even from the prophets. He sees his captors trembling in anticipation of a fate they could not hope to avert. He pours his scorn upon their elaborate but useless worship, and their helpless and ridiculous idols. High above them rose Jahveh. The Babylonian might think of Jahveh as the defeated and insignificant deity of a despised and persecuted people. The prophet knew him to be the creator of the whole earth, who held the universe in the palm of his hand. Thus at last monotheism became conscious of itself.

The style of 2-Isaiah is as distinguished as his thought. No other writer has known how to extract such significance and such music from the words and phrases which he marshals with commanding power. Instead of the brief and pointed but often obscure oracles of the earlier prophets, or the elaborate descriptions, detailed pictures and careful if laboured elucida-

tions of doctrine which we find in Ezekiel, 2-Isaiah has given us glowing rhetorical periods in which comfort and exhortation, raillery and challenge, combine to produce an effect quite new in Hebrew prophecy. Little wonder that his Jewish readers found his message more intelligible and acceptable than that of the strange poet who had preceded him, and indeed chose to preserve those four perplexing songs by embedding them, now here and now there, in these fervid predictions of national restoration. In this way, they forgot the teaching that suffering is the appointed means for delivering others, in the easier teaching that out of suffering comes the sufferer's own way of escape, by the mercy of God. If later Judaism came to think of Jahveh as destining the Gentiles to be the servants of the Jews, or to be swept away from their path to happiness and peace, they could point to 2-Isaiah in justification. But the prophet also taught a nobler lesson; the lesson (so hard to learn even in our own day) that all the might of the proudest empires is powerless against the redeeming will of God, and that in his gracious providence to the oppressed the primal curse of the Fall will be reversed; instead of the thorn shall come up the fir tree, and all flesh shall see it together, since the whole earth is subject to Jahveh, its only creator and lord.

The fifty years of subjection to Babylon, through these three commanding intellects, have given us three of the deepest truths of religion; truths whose full import was long in entering the human mind, but which Christianity, with its illumined eyes, set at the heart of its message; that the unmerited grace of God leads to repentance, and the new heart; that suffering and death, endured for the sake of a sinful world, end in deliverance for the sinners, and resurrection for the redeemer; and that the God who reveals himself as righteousness and mercy is the one God over all the world. A hundred years before, in the East, a solitary figure, Buddha, had called his followers to find salvation from the tormenting world of desire in the extirpation of all thought of self. In the succeeding century in the West, another group of three teachers was to bid men turn from the riddles of existence and their traditional answers, to the spiritual verities of retribution, duty, and self-



PETRA, THE CAPITAL OF EDM

Above. Rock-dwellings

Below. The Amphi-theatre

control. But neither Buddha nor the Greek tragedians, nor even later Hebrew prophets, ever reached the exalted levels to which the agonies and the passionate hopes of the exile led its great interpreters, or guessed that through suffering, seen in the light of the will of a divine redeemer, sin might be borne, and borne away.

For the most part, all that we have of prophecy after Ezekiel till the end of the Persian period, and after, is anonymous. Much of it is fragmentary, and the fragments have been bound up, like the 'Servant Songs', with larger collections. One short poem, however, has a name attached to it—that of Obadiah. Short as it is, it seems to be an enlargement of a still shorter piece, a burst of exultant triumph over Edom. It would be strange if we did not find such pieces among the relics of Hebrew poetry. We have distinguished between the two classes of prophets, those who found Jahveh's gracious purpose in the nation's continued prosperity, and those who found it in the nation's morality and obedience. The distinction, however, must not be pressed too sharply. The prophets of the second class, turning their eyes on the nation itself, saw material enough for the condemnation which they reiterated. But even in its worst days, Israel contained a 'remnant' or a nucleus, which preserved the purer traditions of plain dealing, humanity, and reverence to Jahveh's will.

Of the surrounding nations, Assyria was appallingly cruel and brutal in war, Babylon (in spite of the absence of criticism in Jeremiah and Ezekiel) imposed a heavy and merciless yoke on its subjects. Edom was wild and relentless; and, for the rest, Amos in his two first chapters sketches a dreadful picture of the savagery with which Israel's neighbours carried on their petty but ruthless wars. When, therefore, in the terrible shocks of the seventh and sixth centuries, one power after another fell with a crash, until hardly a throne seemed secure, it was natural that the Hebrew prophet should exult. His 'taunt songs', as they have been called, were not the mere offspring of *Schadenfreude*, joy in another's misfortune. They remind us rather of Aeschylus' *Persae*, stern exultation over a system of violence, trickery and greed, hurled into the dust. A good

example is Nahum's ode of triumph over Assyria. Nahum is not to be classed with Micaiah's opponents or Jeremiah's rival Haniah—although, when these men attacked their country's foes, we can find echoes of their songs in the canonical prophets. The fall of Assyria was a sign to all the world that wickedness and brutality would not live for ever, and that Jahveh sooner or later would put down the mighty from their seat. The same religious confidence (we have only to put ourselves in the place of the Jews in that stormy world to see that it was religious and not jingoistic) animates three striking poems on the fall of Babylon, Is. chh. xiii–xiv, xxi, and Jer. l–li. To understand these, we must recall the sense of outraged misery which inspired Lamentations (see p. 93). The hopeless 'why?' which seems to lie behind those desperate complaints now finds an answer. Oppression, yes; but at last the oppressor has to own a power stronger than himself.

The first of these, attributed in our Bibles, but clearly in error, to Isaiah (see p. 132), is the eager anticipation of an awful calamity that was to destroy Babylon for ever. Written when the Medes (Cyrus was now king of the Medes) were threatening Babylon, the poem pictures the city taken by a savage assault, and then, more boldly, though in a manner reminiscent of Ezekiel's vision of Pharaoh's descent into the underworld, the proud king of Babylon is driven into the land of the dead, and pelted with the derisive contempt of all its inhabitants. It is an arresting expression of the principle of Nemesis with which Greek tragedy within a century was to make the world familiar. The second poem, also contained in the collection known as Isaiah, but not actually attributed to him, is a transcript of some psychic experience, as uncontrollable and overwhelming as the ecstasy of a Delphic sibyl. The subject—one might almost say, the medium—is watching, in agonized excitement, the gathering of troops outside the gate, and the careless feasting within, and suddenly understands the explanation—'Babylon is fallen'!

The third poem, bound up with the collection of prophecies against the nations placed at the end (or in the LXX the middle) of the book of Jeremiah, is really a collection of shorter

poems, each one anticipating or describing the city's downfall. Like the two previous poems (and how unlike Jeremiah !) this contains no reference to the actual condition of the Jews, still less to their conduct and moral relation to Jahveh. Israel might be at the Red Sea once more, and bidden simply to stand still and see the salvation of Jahveh. The standpoint, though not the spirit, is similar to that of 2-Isaiah. It is noteworthy that the city did not fall in the manner here foreshadowed (see p. 140), a fact which incidentally shows clearly that the poems were not written after the event. Nor was Babylon reduced to ruins. It survived to be, among other things, a home for the Jews for many generations. But the soul of the prophecy was certainly fulfilled. And it is the soul which needs to be remembered to-day.

We cannot guess the *provenance* of these poems. It may have been, as with 2-Isaiah, Babylon itself. But we are on surer ground for a time when we pass to the next prophets, Haggai and Zechariah, in the early years of Darius. We are now back in Palestine, and the years and even the months when the prophecies were delivered are carefully stated. It will be remembered that Ezekiel also was careful to date many of his prophecies. But the atmosphere is entirely different. There is none of the elation of 2-Isaiah at the thought of a glorious return to liberty and home. There is no triumph over a fallen enemy. Instead, a series of exhortations to a dispirited people to honour Jahveh by paying attention to their religious duties. Nor is there the old suspicion of ritual observance, of altar or shrine or priest. Indeed, it is a far more meticulous care for altar and shrine and priestly regulations that these prophets demand. Haggai preaches sermons in plain prose ; Zechariah, his ally, but a man of very different temperament, describes a series of visions or rather dreams, and (as if anticipating some of our modern students of dream-psychology) of dreams in symbols, and then learns, and hands on, their interpretation.

Unlike as these two were to the older prophets in their style, they were also unlike in their success. What they demanded was done. But when we pass to the remaining prophetic work

of our period, we are again in obscurity. For at least fifty years, it would seem, there is silence. In the middle of the fifth century, the silence is broken by two voices, strongly dissimilar, yet each in reality the complement of the other. One is known to us as Malachi, 'my messenger'—such is the meaning of the word—probably because of his prediction, 'Behold, I send *my messenger* (Heb. *mal'akhi*) before my face'. The other is now generally known as Third Isaiah, because the eleven chapters which contain his work appear at the end of the canonical book of Isaiah, after 2-Isaiah.¹

Whatever the period in which they worked, the chief danger of the time was felt to be one which threatened both the ritual and the morality of the community, and by both prophets the preservation of the purity of ritual and cultus was felt to be the more important. They would not indeed have recognized the distinction. To them the matter of supreme urgency was holiness, the absence of everything which could contaminate or interfere with the due worship of Jahveh at his shrine. First, therefore, came the necessity for the support of that worship and the priests its ministers; then the destruction of the pagan rites (still springing up everywhere) which were an outrage on the worship of the Temple; and next, the preservation of the 'holy seed', the Jewish race, by whom alone Jahveh could be worshipped. In view of all this, it is curious that the priests were often the great enemies of ritual exclusiveness; the prophets had to chide them for not being true to their own ideals; and Nehemiah gives one the impression that he could have managed Sanballat and Tobiah with ease if it had not been for Eliashib and his family.

But how different is all this from the outlook of 1-Isaiah. The Temple with its worship is now the centre of Jewish life; devotion to its claims is the touchstone of loyalty to Jahveh. Jahveh indeed has become a kind of exalted Persian emperor—the 'great king', as the Greeks and others called him—to whom

¹ For the arguments for placing the two prophecies here, see pp. 167, 177. We cannot be sure that Is. lvi-lxvi is all the work of one man. Certain differences of standpoint and outlook will strike the careful reader, and they are discussed on p. 168; but they do not affect what is said in the text.

the whole earth belongs, but who will send his envoy to his Temple, and then suddenly arrive there himself. When we turn to the manner and style of the two men, the resemblance ceases. Malachi reminds us of Haggai. He argues with his hearers in simple nervous prose, stating their objections, and replying. But he feels deeply, and when indignation sweeps across his thoughts, dialectic is kindled into something of the prophetic fire of the great men of the past. 3-Isaiah, possessed by the same ideals, shows far more of the prophet and the poet. More particularly, he has evidently pondered over the writings of his predecessor in Babylon, 2-Isaiah.¹

Those predictions of Babylon, he feels, have not yet been fulfilled. The exiles, not in Babylon only, but all over the world, have still to be brought home; and there is still need for a herald, filled with the spirit of Jahveh, to proclaim deliverance to the captives, and to preach good tidings to the poor, as numerous inside Palestine as abroad. He does not plead for the recognition of Jahveh's righteousness. It is the righteousness of the community of which he thinks. In his mind the oppressors are not foreigners alone, but the rich and powerful classes in Judaea, who in their wicked complaisance toward their non-Jewish neighbours, dare to contaminate their service to Jahveh with degrading superstitions and obscene rites. Now and then we catch a tone of half-despairing appeal, the very opposite of the proud confidence of 2-Isaiah. But the prophet is sure that from this new exile deliverance will come, and as he looks into the future, with the ranging and undimmed eye of spiritual vision, we hear the authentic prophetic ring in his tones, and his language rises to heights unsurpassed by 2-Isaiah himself.

With him, prophecy in the true sense of the word comes to an end. The others who bear the name in the prophetic canon take a steadily widening view. Instead of thinking of the immediate destinies of their own nation and its neighbours, greater and smaller, they envisage a cosmic catastrophe, when Jahveh will judge all the nations on earth. They thus pass from prophecy into what is known as apocalyptic. It would be

¹ For this reason his separate existence has only been at all widely suspected in the last twenty or thirty years.

foolish to minimize the grandeur of this aftermath of prophecy ; but what it gains in sweep and vision, it loses in that ethical intensity of conviction which has made the earlier prophets the articulate conscience of mankind. The great prophets of our period are not apocalyptists ; but we can see ritual beginning to take a place beside morality that was never allowed by the prophets before the exile ; and when once the affirmation is made that ritual of itself commends us to God, the door opens to all the racial pride of men who rejoice to have Abraham to their father ; and the axe, once wielded by the prophets, must then, in hands no less stern, destroy the work of their mistaken and short-sighted successors.

D. THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE LAW

Important as it may be for the history of prophecy, the period before us is above all else the period of the formation of the Jewish law. At its beginnings, we have at best a few more or less authoritative collections of statutes and precedents ; at the close, we have a large body of laws, complicated and composite, which henceforth are to be, even more than the Temple and the national traditions, the very centre of Judaism. In this section we have briefly to trace this transition ; the actual text of the various laws will be dealt with more fully in other volumes of the series.

To begin with, we must be clear about the meaning of our terms. The English word 'law' does not adequately represent any of the Hebrew words used in connexion with the Mosaic legislation. Of these, the two commonest and most important are 'torah' and 'mishpat'. The former means properly 'instruction', as given, for example, when a worshipper comes to a shrine and desires to make an offering. To be in the close neighbourhood of Jahveh is dangerous, and if the worshipper would be sure of acting aright and avoiding some sudden 'breaking-out' of the deity on a wrong or mistaken action, he must be directed by the priest. The priest is one who knows the rubric and the formulae, and who possesses a 'holiness' impossible to the layman. He can give his 'torah' (cf. Judges xvii. 10 f.). Naturally, with the growing influence of the shrines and the increase in the sacrifices, the 'torah' would grow. Ritual always tends to become more complex and elaborate rather than to be simplified. Accordingly, in an age when comparatively few could read, and fewer still could write or cared to do so, the priest was a necessity for all due and ordered and even safe worship. 'Torah' is also used of the direction or lore of the prophets, and, by a natural extension, of the general instruction graciously given by Jahveh to his people ; and, lastly, for the whole law of Moses as collected in the Pentateuch. The authority it possesses is naturally the authority of the source from which it is held to be derived.

'Mishpat' also has a wide range of meaning. Derived from a root signifying 'to give a judicial sentence', it may mean a law-case, the law-court, or the general quality of justice in the judge or arbitrator. Another term is often found joined to 'mishpatim' or 'judgements', viz. statutes, the Hebrew word for which is derived from a root meaning to inscribe, and referring properly to the actual commands issued and enforced by a magistrate or ruler (for a summary statement see Driver, *Deuteronomy*, p. 62). But more often 'mishpat' means a definite sentence, in answer to a question raised as to a particular case, the sentence or decision then becoming a precedent. Such precedents were naturally in process of time collected, to form codes similar to the *ius praetoris* in Rome. 'Judgements' being thus a term denoting primarily the precedents or judicial decisions of the civil and criminal courts, 'statutes' may be taken to refer to positive institutions or enactments, whether moral, ceremonial, or civil. A fourth term, 'mizvoth', may best be rendered by our English term 'orders' or 'regulations', as used either in the army or by some properly constituted local or municipal magistrate.

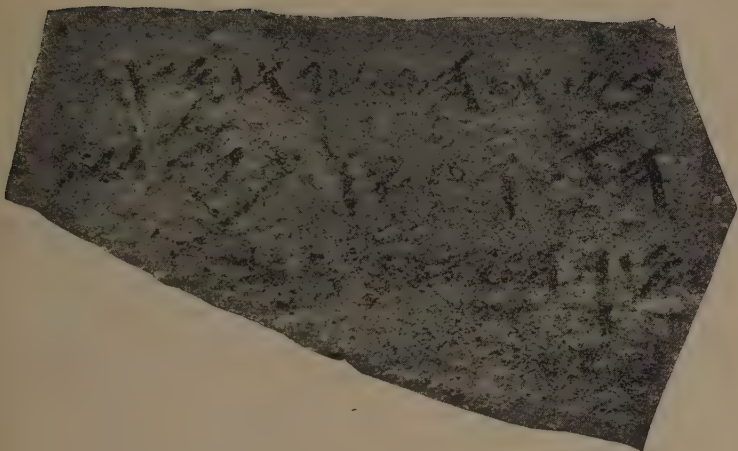
So far, we have been considering the words in their social or legal rather than their religious significance. And two things must be borne in mind with regard to them all. First, they do not imply either promulgation by a legislative body, or (to use a now familiar term) sanctions. Apart from persons who possessed prestige as often as actual authority, and who were arbitrators rather than legislators or judges, there was no one among the Hebrews whose business it was either to pass laws or to punish their infraction. Personal power and influence could enforce them, or fling them aside. The priests at Shiloh could defy a long-established usage which regulated the sacerdotal privileges of the altar; and Ahab could flout the traditional and time-honoured security of the peasant in his ancestral holding. If times were bad or disordered, in fact, there was nothing to prevent a 'law' becoming a dead letter, or an ideal and a dream.

It must be remembered, too, that no law-courts in our sense of the word existed in Israel. A hard case would be brought before the elders at the town gate; or it would be taken to

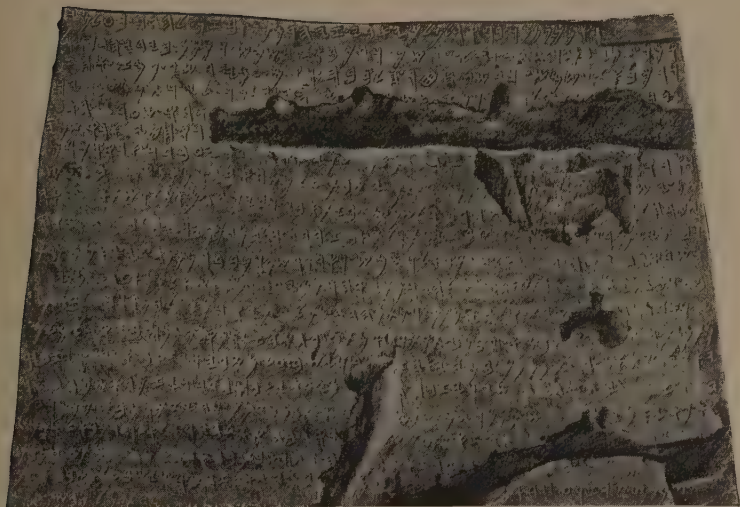
a recognized arbitrator or judge, or to a priest, or appeal would be made to the king (cf. 2 Sam. xv. 2); and no one knew whether he would really get justice from any one of these sources. So far from honesty being taken for granted in the judge, it was looked on as a special virtue. To the great prophets, one of the chief glories of Jahveh himself was that he could not be bribed! Still, the reverence for law was there, and, however flouted by the rich and powerful, it was as deeply rooted in men's thoughts, if not in their actual practice, in Palestine as in Rome.

But, secondly, law was really much more than a set of statutes drawn up by an individual authority and enforced by him; it was a constant and abiding principle. It might need to be adapted and brought up to date; but it was an unwritten and secure observance, like the Greek law of the family to which Sophocles makes Antigone appeal. This meant, for the Hebrew, that law came from Jahveh; and he therefore thought of it as having come through Moses. Many of the laws, indeed, are demonstrably earlier than Moses. They go back to a distant antiquity. But in all Israelite tradition Moses is the organizer of Israelite national life, and every law whose authority is thus recognized, if its origin is thought about at all, is regarded as given, alike in its earlier and later stages or forms, by Moses himself.

From this followed a very important result. Writing, among the Hebrews, as among the earlier Greeks and Romans, was a serious business. Copies of a law would be hard to come by, and even to make. Much of the law that we should call usage, either civil or ceremonial, would be handed down orally, at important religious shrines (that the priests had judicial functions is well known), and perhaps not written down at all for long periods of time. Brief or even lengthy bodies of law might be inscribed on stone, like the code of Hammurabi, the Decalogue, or the famous laws of Gortyn in Crete. Later on, they might be written also on parchment. There is much evidence that the Hebrew laws were often arranged for easier recollection in pentads or groups of five, and these, coupled together, became 'decalogues'. In time these were gathered into larger collec-



Israelite Inscription
Early Hebrew writing



Part of the Hadad Statue
Aramaic writing

tions or codes, such as we have in the Book of the Covenant (Ex. xxi-xxiii). But such a proceeding could hardly be carried out, in the simple and rather elementary conditions of early life in Palestine, with the system of a Hammurabi, a Justinian, or a Napoleon. Properly speaking, the Hebrew collections were not codes at all, but collections of *sententiae*, maxims, rules, decisions, precedents, and principles. They would contain older and newer material; civil, ritual, and criminal laws might be mixed together, and, interspersed with them, maxims for private conduct, kindness, forbearance, tolerance, at which the Shylocks of all ages and nations have been wont to laugh. The 'law of the land', in western countries, is drawn up to be administered by the magistrate in court; the Hebrew collections were made to inform or instruct (cf. the name 'torah' above) the layman, the priest, the arbitrator, as to what had been done, or ought to be done, or what would be done if things were as they should be. They remind us now of mediaeval canon law, with its sublime demands on state and church; now of English 'equity'; now of ecclesiastical or conciliar decisions, and now of diocesan 'uses'.

Bearing this in mind, we can understand the form which the Jewish law assumes in the Hebrew Bible. What are commonly called the Codes (as for example the Deuteronomic, the Holiness, and the Priests' Codes) are each of them collections, or rather collections of collections, of decisions, *responsa prudentum* or established practices. And though it may be possible to date the formation of the codes, it is generally quite impossible to date the individual 'laws'. The early collection known as the Book of the Covenant comes for consideration in vol. ii, and Deuteronomy in vol. iii. For a further discussion of Deuteronomy and the recent theories of its origin and purpose see p. 201. Deuteronomy furnishes a convenient illustration of what has just been said. The central or 'legal' part of the book, (chh. xii-xxvi) has generally been identified with the 'book' which was found in the Temple in 621 and so gave the impetus to Josiah's great centralizing reform; and most of the other chapters, excluding the poems, have been regarded as being closely connected with this legislative kernel. With this view

we see no reason to disagree. But it does not follow that the laws were all of them devised by the jurists, civil and ecclesiastical, who wrote the book, whether in the seventh century or the eighth. 'Deuteronomy, says Dillmann truly, is anything but an original law-book. The laws which agree with the Book of the Covenant can be demonstrated to be old . . . the priestly usages alluded to are evidently not innovations. . . . Even the law for the centralization of worship, it is probable, is only relatively an innovation' (Driver, *Deut.*, p. lvi). Every law, in fact, is a more or less logical development of principles embodied, though less clearly, in earlier usage. In a collection of such 'laws' we must not ask for rigid consistency: those who drew up the Deuteronomic code, for example, did not know whether it would be obeyed. They were more anxious to provide what was to their minds important, than to harmonize it. They were not mere theorists, but they did not believe in limiting 'what ought to be in the coming days', or 'what has been in the simpler past', by 'what seems possible in the present'. For the legislator was always something of the prophet; the 'torah' of the priest, like the visions of the prophet, had been given by Jahveh.

It is not therefore surprising if some, like Hölcher, have held Deuteronomy to be the work of 'ideologues'; if others, like Dr. Welch, the work of statesmen working in the early years of the Northern Kingdom; and others again, like Steuernagel, of successive editors. All three statements, up to a point, are true; and they are true of subsequent work on the law. Ezekiel, though never officially regarded as a legislative authority, shows the characteristic combination of the practical reformer and the theorist, and as long as he remains within the walls of the Temple of his vision, he never passes beyond the limits of the possible. The group who drew up the 'Holiness Code' (Lev. xvii-xxvi) are like Ezekiel. It does not matter to them if the Temple is, for the time being, in ruins. Its usages abide, however sadly they had been interfered with and its fabric polluted. Deuteronomy had not availed to prevent that. All the more reason for restating the principles of holiness and for emphasizing their fundamental laws, previously forgotten with such deplorable results. But holiness was a matter of more than ritual praxis.

It was affected by individual conduct also. It meant obedience to 'taboos', or restrictions in relation to food, to marriage, to farm life; it demanded personal acts and attitudes and habits, such as wearing simple clothing or loving one's neighbour as oneself. All this, then, must be put in; and if the compilation was complete, the order and arrangement did not greatly matter.

If we now turn our attention to Palestine after the exile we can see another aspect of the history of the Jewish law. The recognized authorities had gone, as they had gone from Samaria nearly 150 years before. There was no one to give 'torah' or to promise 'mishpat'. Yet some order and practice there had to be. Worship had to be carried on. Quarrels between individuals would need to be settled by appeal to some admitted principles. Priests there would be, even if they were little better than hedge-priests. But the Jews in Babylon who kept up communications with Jerusalem before 586 were forced, after that date, to let things in Palestine go their own way. When we enter daylight again in 520 we find priests in a recognized position in the community. There is no mention of a law-book; but the priests can give their decision or 'torah' when it is asked for (Hag. ii. 10; cf. Zech. vii. 2; see p. 152); and when the Temple was rebuilt, it appears probable that Deuteronomy and the Holiness Code were combined, either at the time or later on, to guide its ministrants. Neither of these works gave full directions; many questions as to ritual would be inevitably asked (unless a comparatively full oral tradition was in existence) to which no answer is there provided. The innovations, or reversions to an older type, which the prophets had bewailed in the earlier Temple, would be impossible to avoid in the new, with a mixed and ignorant population 'squatting' around it. How many copies of Deuteronomy would exist in Judaea? On the other hand, when a temple was built, about the same time, by the Jews in Egypt (see p. 217), we find that they knew nothing of Deuteronomy, and, apparently without a qualm of conscience, returned or wandered away into disobedience to the first command of the Decalogue.

Third Isaiah points to the continuance of the same paganism in Judaea after the Temple had been duly restored (see p. 167).

That is to say, disobedience to a law does not prove that the law did not exist, or even that it was unknown.¹ But while some might flout the laws, others were ready to apply and extend them. In the middle of the fifth century Nehemiah had to reform the manners and the worship of Jerusalem, as well as to rebuild its walls. And, though he made no appeal, as far as we are informed, to a written code, it was the principles of Deuteronomy which he put into practice.² In his own position and prestige and influence he found a more serviceable weapon than in the authority of a law-book. But circumstances were changing. Persian goodwill would not always be there to be counted on. The problem of mixed marriages needed some more drastic treatment. The hitherto customary dues for the clergy were not enough now to support them, in spite of Nehemiah's regulations. The traditional festivals needed reorganizing if they were to be truly religious and freed from the taints of popular merry-making. Civil and criminal practice was now looked after by the Persian governors, and the 'mishpatim' that had once guided the elders and priests had lost their importance.

On the other hand there were many customary usages beloved by the populace, of which the older codes had said nothing; they had been taught to the Hebrews, as they were still practised by the surrounding heathen, or they had come down from an immemorial antiquity.³ It would be wisdom to regulate them and bring them into definite relation with the accepted ritual of the altar of Jahveh.⁴ At the same time, it was absolutely necessary to lay stress on what had become in Babylon the hall-mark

¹ English ecclesiastical history in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries shows how one party in a religious community may practise what another regards as impiety or superstition, and authority be slow to enforce the laws to which appeal is made.

² For a further discussion of Nehemiah's relation to Deuteronomy see p. 191. It is quite possible that he was acquainted with the 'Holiness' Code, Lev. xvii-xxvi: but he did not appeal to it, so far as we know, as a recognized authority.

³ We may compare the way in which heathen practices were 'baptized' by Christianity in the early Middle Ages, or the Brahmins of India gathered aboriginal practices into Hinduism.

⁴ One of these, the widespread ritual of the scape-goat, was associated with what became the most important assembly of the Jewish sacred year, on the Day of Atonement.

of Judaism, the sabbath, and to ensure that it was treated, not as a religious festival, like the old celebration of the new moon, with which it had hitherto been connected, but as a day on which any kind of field-work and marketing was laid aside. Even more important, the whole status of the priesthood, left somewhat vague by the Deuteronomists and unsatisfactory by Ezekiel, needed defining. A clearer scheme of the round of Temple observances had also to be presented; for, after Nehemiah's work, it was clear that Judaism meant worship, ritual, Temple, and law.

Such were the convictions of the more earnest Jews in Babylon, and doubtless there was, after Nehemiah, a strong party in Jerusalem which shared them. They were embodied in the collection known as the Priests' Code. This code, like its predecessors, was not written by a single hand. Like them, too, it was a compilation. It contained a number of subordinate collections. But, unlike them, it was strikingly homogeneous. Civil laws it left out almost entirely. Ritual laws it treated with considerable freedom. It seldom merely preserved the old laws; it extended and developed them. Its makers were wholly guided by the necessities stated in the previous paragraph. But, drastic and revolutionary as they were, it never occurred to them that they were not being perfectly loyal to Moses and to Jahveh. True, several of the smaller collections seem to have contained originally no reference to Moses. But when the compilers prefixed to each the words 'Jahveh said to Moses', they were acting in the spirit of previous legislators, and they knew it.

Such was the 'law' brought to Palestine by Ezra. That his promulgation of it followed the work of Nehemiah seems certain (see p. 200), and if we may follow Ezra vii. 1, understanding Artaxerxes as the second of that name, we shall place Ezra's expedition at the beginning of the fourth century B.C., and after the letter of the Jewish community to their compatriots at Elephantine on 'Mazzoth' (see p. 222), and the subsequent destruction of the Elephantine temple. The stricter party, in the years after Nehemiah, had done its work. The law, with all its demands, was accepted with a solemn act of covenant by the whole community. This does not mean that every provision

of the law was at once carried out. Indeed, the history of the Greek period, especially under the Seleucid kings, shows that the priests themselves, as formerly, could be the most vigorous opponents of orthodoxy. But the act was a kind of 'Reformation Settlement'. And the diffusion of the knowledge of the individual regulations, and the substitution of these regulations for the older and laxer proceedings, was only a matter of time. The agreement was really one of the most momentous ever taken in the history of a religion or a society.

The story of the law, however, is not yet complete. The earlier collections, though superseded by Ezra's code, were not wholly set aside. No sooner had Ezra's work been recognized than the scribes turned to a further task of compilation. The circles which had produced Ezra's code had also worked out a sketch of the history of the nation, and indeed of its antecedents as far back as the creation itself, on the scheme of a series of successive covenants made by Jahveh with the patriarchs and the nation, and leading up to the first promulgation of the law at Sinai. This, with the law itself, formed what is known as the 'Priestly Document' or 'P'. Once it was complete, it was not difficult to enlarge it by inserting in it the other history which we call JE—the two documents J and E had been previously combined. Thus a continuous but far from well-jointed narrative was brought into being. Finally, the existing legal collections, the Decalogue, the Book of the Covenant, Deuteronomy, and the Holiness Code (H), were inserted at what were felt to be the appropriate places; Deuteronomy naturally, as containing the account of the death of Moses, coming after the other codes of law. This was a bold step, for no one, it might have been thought, could fail to see the inconsistencies and contradictions involved. The alternative would have been suppression. But this was impossible. Had not these other documents all the authority of the past—of Moses himself and of Jahveh? And the students of the law, now a large and well-recognized class, could always be trusted to explain difficulties that might arise.

The historical sketch drawn up by the priests did not come to an end till the account of the final settlement of the conquered

land among the tribes. In this later section, as in the earlier parts of the history, were inserted the relevant parts of JE.¹ But it was felt that the history of Israel after the death of Moses was of less importance. What really mattered was the story of Moses and the giving of the law, and all that led up to this consummation. The section which followed the story of Moses' burial (our book of Joshua) was therefore separated from the rest. Then, for convenience' sake, the remainder was divided into five books; the divisions were made at the death of Joseph, the completion of the account of the tabernacle in the wilderness, and the supplementary chapter on tithes added to H; this produced four books, and Deuteronomy made the fifth. These were then known as the 'Five Books of Moses' or the 'Five-fifths of the Law'; and all were regarded with equal reverence, that is to say, as the very words of Moses himself, from whom the law originated.

All this could not be accomplished in a day. But the work of Ezra had familiarized the people with the authority of the written word. The religion of the scribe had become the religion of the community. And by the time that the Samaritans finally broke away (see p. 237), the authority of the law of Moses, now identical with our Pentateuch, was completely recognized. The Samaritans took it away with them, and they never added to it. In process of time, however, other books, long valued in private, came to be selected for the public worship of the Jewish Church in the synagogues; they were carefully preserved and treated with ceremonial respect—the 'Prophets', and, later, the 'Writings', making up the twenty-two sacred books of the Jewish Canon. But the sect of the Sadducees² refused to be bound by anything save what they believed to come from Moses, and in subsequent ages all orthodox Jews have held that complete authority is only to be found in Moses, and that the other writings, edifying and inspiring as they may be, are only authoritative in so far as they

¹ To this complete work, stretching from the creation to the death of Joshua, has been given the name of the Hexateuch, the 'Six Books', i. e. the five books 'of Moses', with Joshua added to them.

² Is it a coincidence that the Sadducees were the successors of the party in Jerusalem which had been most closely connected with the Samaritans?

are in agreement with the great work which enshrines the code of Ezra.

‘We have this treasure in earthen vessels.’ St. Paul’s pathetic reflection must often be in the mind of the student of the life of the Jewish Church after the exile. Even in the previous centuries, Israel, the ‘people of God’, could not be called the only repository in the world of elevated conceptions of God and man. The older sacred books of the East, rare gleams in the literature of Egypt and Babylon, and sudden flashes in the earlier poems of Greece, show that God had not left Himself without witness among the nations. From the sixth century onward, a new leaven was working in the world; and scholars would tell us that from Egypt, Persia, and Greece, to say nothing of influences coming from farther afield, the Jews received more than they ever gave. It is not our task to estimate the relative amount of these exchanges; but no serious attempt has ever been made to show anything comparable, outside Israel, with the profound religious insight that animated the three great prophets of the exile and produced the Psalter and the book of Job. On the other hand, the history of the nation makes reading which is often painful, and often sordid. The magnificence of these formative ideas, we complain, was lost, ‘hidden from the eyes’ of the men to whom they were entrusted; religion came to mean nothing but fidelity to a set of peculiar and very unattractive regulations; and the divisions which rent the nation from time to time were concerned with nothing but the question of more or less of this fidelity, in which both parties forgot the nobler laws of morality, and the most eager devotion lost itself in endless refinements of interpretation, and caricatured its reverence to God into hatred of all His children excepting the seed of Abraham.

We must not exaggerate. In no country and no age has history ever been able to give due attention to the mass of decent, orderly, patient, and kindly men and women who make up the bulk of any stable society; and we easily forget the multitudes of pious but inconspicuous Jews who ‘loved the law’ because it enabled them to draw near to Jahveh, the Lord of all good

life. We must wait for the Gospels to appreciate the service these men rendered to the nation. Still, even if the vessel is unlovely, the treasure is there. And we shall understand it all the better if we can see it like a light shining in a dark place, thrown against a background of poverty and struggle, superstition and cowardice ; ' fightings without and fears within '. For if the intrigues of Sanballat and Eliashib enable us to estimate Nehemiah at his true worth, the blunt utilitarianism of Haggai and the narrow patriotism of Obadiah will illumine the soaring faith that leads on to the world's redemption upon Calvary.

INTRODUCTION AND NOTES TO
SELECTED PASSAGES

THE BOOK OF EZEKIEL

INTRODUCTION

OF all the prophetic writings the book of Ezekiel is the most symmetrical and the best arranged. Unlike the book of Isaiah, which contains a mass of writings of very various dates, arranged with but little reference to chronology, or that of Jeremiah, where the arrangement of the different sections of the book, although they all profess to refer to Jeremiah, is often quite unchronological, the book of Ezekiel begins with the prophet's call, and ends with the last of his prophetic discourses, while the other prophecies, a number of which are dated, appear to be carefully placed in the order in which they were delivered or received. The only exceptions to the rule are that in the group of prophecies against the nations, a later oracle on Tyre is placed in its logical order with the rest of the section on Tyre; the date in xxxiii. 21 is earlier than the dates in xxxii (1, 17), but the text is uncertain; and the last prophecy on Tyre is inserted immediately after the prophecy (xxix. 1-16) which it is intended to correct.

The book further falls naturally into two halves; the first of which (chh. i-xxiv) deals with the coming destruction of Jerusalem, and is almost entirely occupied therefore with denunciation; it divides itself into five sections; the prophet's call (i-iii), the first cycle of threats (iv-vii), Jerusalem's sin and fall (viii-xi), and two more cycles of threats (xii-xix, and xx-xxiv). The second half is, broadly speaking, constructive; its first section (xxv-xxxii) consists of prophecies against the nations, and more particularly against those nations whose existence constituted in the prophet's eyes a special danger to Judah; the second deals with the spiritual conversion and restoration of the exiles themselves, and their resettlement in their own land, followed by the invasion and annihilation of the savage hosts from the North, an event which leaves Palestine finally free for the peaceful development of the restored community; and the third (xl-xlvi) contains the vision of the new Temple, and of the city and country of which it was to be the centre. The dates given in the book (with the exception of the curious 'thirtieth year' in ch. i. 1) are all reckoned from the captivity, i.e. the first deportation in March 597.



A MODERN PERSIAN TOWN

The type of building seen here is probably not very different from that familiar to ancient Babylonia

Further, it is possible to detect, in the order of the passages within the different sections, something of a psychological sequence, which at any rate suggests that the prophet put down the record of his experiences as they came to him. Thus, in the second cycle of threats, the prophet begins with two dramatic representations of the coming flight from the city; then he turns against those who would buoy up their countrymen with false hopes; he re-emphasizes the point he had already made with regard to individual responsibility, and repeats the certainty of the future disaster, pressing it home by the figure of a useless piece of vine-wood. Then, as if to justify this, he inserts an elaborate condemnation of the conduct of the nation through the whole of its history, with another simile borrowed from the vine, and an attack upon the perjury of the present king of Judah; then, in answer to a counter-attack of his hearers, 'we are being punished for the sins of our fathers', he replies that Jahveh only punishes men for their own sins, and ends with a dirge over the princes of the royal house and the desolation of the vine. There is no other prophet who allows us to follow out his thought from one chapter to another in this fashion.

On the other hand, there are certain parallels or doublets which suggest the existence of two recensions; e.g., at the close of the last vision of the chariot, x. 21 f. compared with vv. 8 ff.; but Ezekiel may well be referring to recollections of different points in his vision as they would occur or recur to a still excited mind. More important is the question of the 'Gog' passage in chh. xxxviii, xxxix; xxxix begins with a denunciation of Gog, who has been already destroyed in xxxviii. 18 ff., and the summons to birds and beasts in xxxix. 17 ff. comes strangely after the burial of the horde in vv. 11 ff. Other doublets are to be noticed in xxxviii. 4-9 and 10-16; xxxix. 21, 23-6 and vv. 22, 27-9. They may perhaps be defended by saying that a trance experience cannot be expected to be entirely logical; and if we have the redaction by a second hand, or by Ezekiel himself at a later date, would not the resulting illogicalities have been as likely to be detected?

However, that the text has in many places suffered from later additions seems certain. First, apart from passages which look like addenda, e.g., xxxi. 15-18 and xxxii. 29-32, the concluding vision (xl-xlviii) shows many signs of being worked over; xlv. 19-24 clearly belongs to chh. xl-xlii, xliii. 1-12 is paralleled by xlv. 1-8. Moreover, Jahveh is sometimes spoken of as addressing the prophet, sometimes the prophet addresses the people, speaking of Jahveh in the third person (xlv. 15 ff.,

and xlv. 1 ff.), while in xliii. 18 ff. we have the second person singular used, reminding us of the phraseology of Leviticus. The question has also been very often asked whether, apart from the further doublet xlv. 1-8a, xlviii. 8-15, the whole rearrangement of the land among the tribes must not be attributed to a later hand (cf. Num. xxxiv). That a document dealing with a subject in which the legalizing mind of a later century was so greatly interested would be specially liable to annotation or addition is possible enough.

Weightier evidence is furnished by the LXX translation, which points to two distinct recensions of the whole book. It is undeniable that in the Hebrew (Massoretic) text represented in our English versions there are redundancies and repetitions which, though we may put them down to a certain turgidity in the prophet's own style, detract distinctly from the vigour and effectiveness of his language. In the LXX most of these are cut away, phrases are sharpened (e.g. v. 16, ix. 1), parallels to the Priests' Code or to H are absent in the LXX (e.g. xxviii. 13), and obvious glosses are omitted (xvi. 32, xlii. 12). Here the text from which the LXX was translated seems more likely to be the original, but the case seems clearer where numerical and other errors disappear in the LXX (xlii. 3, xlv. 1, 20). It must be added, however, that the advantage is by no means altogether on the side of the LXX. The problem of the LXX text is far from simple, and, as regards Ezekiel, there are indications that two translators were at work on the Hebrew, one of whom is responsible for chh. i-xxvii, xl-xlviii, and the other for chh. xxviii-xxxix (see Thackeray, *J. T. S.*, 1911, pp. 286-93; Herrmann, *Beiträge zur Entstehung der LXX*, 1923).

On the whole, the facts seem to point to considerable freedom in the treatment of the text of the book, a freedom which is certainly not unfamiliar in other prophetic books, but for which the special obscurity of many parts of Ezekiel and the subject-matter of the concluding chapters offered an easy invitation. The LXX shows us the state of the text, or of a text at one period of its development, possibly in the second century B.C., and the Massoretic text has gone farther in the same direction. But the very obscurities that are left show that even before the fixation of the text by the Massoretic scholars, copyists were more anxious to reproduce what they found than to correct.

The problem of the text, however, connects itself with a psychological problem with regard to Ezekiel himself. The most rapid reader must feel that he is in the presence of two

Ezekiels, or even three. The ruthless denouncer of idolatrous practices in the land and in the Temple, who can see not a particle of good in the whole history of the nation, seems entirely different from the prophet of the restoration and the new heart; while the last nine chapters point to the authorship of one who is not a prophet at all but a priest. Hölscher has urged that 'the genuine Ezekiel stands with both feet on the ground of the older prophetism; he was turned into a teacher of the law and the father of the later nomism in the fifth century, by the author of the book that bears his name'. Hölscher would allow to the sixth-century Ezekiel nothing but the nucleus of the two visions, in chh. i-v and viii-xi, and the nucleus of the prophecies against Jerusalem in chh. xv-xxiv, against Tyre in chh. xxvii f., and Egypt in chh. xxix-xxxii, and he holds that the 'phantasies' of the genuine Ezekiel are of much less historical value than the work of the author of the 'pseudepigraph'.

Hölscher's radical treatment of the book cannot be demonstrated to be wrong; and it is true, as he says, that Ezekiel seems to take, in his earlier chapters, but little notice of the distinctly Deuteronomic ideas which would presumably be familiar in his priestly circle, as with the authors of H. On the other hand, to cut away most of the book, in the absence of direct evidence for its lateness, can hardly be called scientific criticism. The later chapters of Ezekiel present a like psychological problem; but they do not suggest an entirely different historical environment, as is the case with the later sections in Isaiah as compared with the first half of that book. Nor is the psychological problem insoluble. Jeremiah, with whose work Ezekiel was almost certainly acquainted, shows the same combination of despair and confidence (note especially chh. xxx, xxxi); and the interest of Ezekiel, as a priest, in ritual, is shown in many small but by no means negligible references in his earlier work. It cannot be said to be *a priori* impossible that a priest should be able to give expression to prophetic ideals; Jeremiah himself was a priest, though not, like Ezekiel, connected with the Temple in the capital. For the union of prophetic and priestly sympathies we have an outstanding example in Deuteronomy itself. Doubt has been recently cast on the hitherto generally accepted date of Deuteronomy; but there are still strong reasons (see p. 201) for connecting at least the central part of Deuteronomy with Josiah's legislation; and that moral precepts, dear to the prophets, were not foreign to Hebrew law is clear even from the Book of the Covenant (Exod. xxi-xxiii).

There seems to be no difficulty in believing that Ezekiel, a sensitive and generous-minded young priest, came under strong prophetic influence, before his deportation in 597, that he interpreted the impending fall of the city in that sense, that he shared the deep prophetic conviction that Jahveh could not finally give up his people, and that in foreshadowing the restored state, his old enthusiasm for a purified ritual found new expression.

A final word must be said on what have been called Ezekiel's psychic traits. Some of his discourses are distinctly homiletic and prosaic; others are impassioned and imaginative poems; others again read like transcripts of experiences that can hardly be called normal. Largely, it would seem, on the score of the prolonged physical rigidity apparently implied in ch. iv, Ezekiel has been called a cataleptic. But Ezekiel's work taken as a whole is no more consistent with catalepsy than St. Paul's career is consistent with his alleged epilepsy. Most of these abnormal experiences are discussed below. They must be distinguished from the brief and often enigmatical oracles which have been held to prove 'ecstasy' in the earlier prophets. Such brief oracles are conspicuously absent in Ezekiel. His discourses are all fairly long and connected. The examples of rapid transition of thought and confusion of imagery are best explained if we suppose that the prophet is describing and even living over again the memories of a vivid trance or dream, while allowing himself, as notably in the last nine chapters, to add to them his later reflections. It is hardly surprising, in view of divergences between these last nine chapters and the Pentateuch, that the authority of Ezekiel was doubted in Talmudic circles; but his place in the Hebrew Bible, as a third with Isaiah and Jeremiah, is at least as old as the earlier half of the second century B.C. (Ecclus. xlix. 8).

In the pages which follow, no attempt will be made to offer a complete commentary on the book; but the more important and typical passages will be selected and their significance for Ezekiel's whole work will be pointed out. In this way it is hoped that the reader will be led on, by the use of some continuous commentary, to make the acquaintance of the book in its entirety. As we have already hinted, Ezekiel is, in quite an exceptional sense, an 'author'. Most scholars—the latest as well as the earliest—agree that he carefully preserved and then worked up the records of his prophetic experiences, arranging them in an order that was at once chronological and logical. Even more liable to gusts of excitement than his predecessors, he was resolved, as it would seem, that the visionary spirit of

the prophet should be subject to the prophet ; and by transcription, explanatory additions, arrangement, and possibly omissions, he has turned his seemingly random utterances, many of which appeared at the time bewildering and pointless, into an ordered composition which throws an indispensable light on the religious problems of the early years of exile, on the forces which were to shape the later developments of Judaism, and on the inner experiences of the recipients of the message of Jahveh.

NOTES ON EZEKIEL

CHAPTER I. *Ezekiel's First Vision.* After a brief introduction, which is intended to date the beginning of the book (vv. 1-3), Ezekiel describes in great and perplexing detail the theophany which came to him by the river Chebar, in Babylonia, where he was dwelling with the exiles whom he had accompanied from Jerusalem at the first deportation in 597. Out of a storm-cloud arising in the North he sees, not the expected lightning, but a fire, which becomes four luminous living creatures, bearing above them something solid, which itself carried the 'likeness of' a rider. All round this moving throne is a brilliant rainbow ; and by the brightness and terror of it all the prophet is overwhelmed.

Such would be our account of the experience if we could pass from vv. 4, 5 to vv. 26-8. This indeed would seem to have been the framework of the vision, and it is intelligible and impressive enough, reminding us of the experiences of Amos, Isaiah, and Jeremiah, and even of Elijah and Micaiah, but with an added and characteristic picturesqueness. But vv. 6-25 contain details of the heavenly chariot and its steeds which are exceedingly difficult to work out into an orderly plan. For the various attempts to do this the reader is referred to the commentaries. Here it is enough to notice that we find reminiscences of the furniture of the Jerusalem Temple and of the religious sculptures of Babylon (the winged genii, the colossal man-bulls), along with conceptions of what is proper to the divine which are peculiar to Ezekiel (the number 'four' occurring throughout ; cf. the description of the city in the last vision). All through, there is an impression of wind ('spirit', the same word in the Hebrew) and unearthly light, which doubtless was made upon the prophet at the beginning of his vision.



DEMONS (From an Assyrian Bas-relief)

Babylonian religious fancy was prolific in these monsters, and their representations on the walls of temples and palaces would be familiar to Ezekiel and his fellow-exiles

Can anything more be said as to its nature? We are far from being able to distinguish between what we call vision, trance, and ecstasy; all we can say is that on this occasion, moved by a striking appearance in the sky, Ezekiel passed into a state which made him conscious of a sight more elaborate and more co-ordinated than would seem possible in a normal dream; and that this prepared him for a conviction as to his future work (ch. ii) which is noticeably like that of Jeremiah, and which he recognized as coming from God. How much of vv. 6-25 is due to memory and to subsequent reflection or imagination, it is impossible to say; but we have here a psychological document of the first importance, not so much on account of the overpowering experience, perhaps, as of its recollection and description.

I. *thirtieth*. This is entirely obscure. Elsewhere, as in v. 2, Ezekiel dates his prophecies from the deportation. Thus the date of this vision is 593/2. Thirty years from this would take us back to Josiah's reformation.

3. The Chebar has been identified as a canal near Nippur. Ezekiel, as we learn from chh. viii. 1, and xxiv. 16, was married and had his own house.

4. *the north*; in Babylonian mythology, the place of the mountain dwelling of the gods, and the region from which the Hebrew prophets quite naturally looked for destructive and apocalyptic invasions.

II. *the wings*. Doubtless a reminiscence of Isaiah's vision (ch. vi), but mixed, as so often in dreams, with other memories and phantasies quite foreign to Isaiah.

22. *firmament*, i. e. something hard and solid; the word could be used for a platform or the floor of a chariot. Means for conveying the gods about in solemn processions were familiar in Babylon and Egypt, as in India to-day; and the Hebrews had their sacred ark, which could be carried into battle, or lodged within the capital.

26. *the likeness of*. The combination of daring and caution will be noticed here. The fear of *seeing* Jahveh extends through the whole period of the religion of Israel. To the priestly mind, Jahveh could not be seen (cf. Exod. xxxiii. 23). Ezekiel manages to make us feel that he really did see, yet not see, the invisible. We may compare the art of the last canto of Dante's *Paradiso*. Much ingenuity has been spent on the wings, and on the wheels in relation to the car which they supported. In the present state of the text, however, it seems lost labour to inquire how far Ezekiel constructed and how far he

manipulated the details of his vision to express the religious ideas with which he was labouring. A similar vision is described in ch. x, where, in place of the detailed destruction of Jerusalem, the prophet sees Jahveh leaving it. The chariot appears once more, but in ch. x the living creatures are called cherubs (not seraphs, as in Is. vi) and the coals of fire of Is. vi reappear, but not to consecrate the prophet—to set the doomed city on fire!

CHAPTER IV. After an interval of a week, the prophet is visited by a second message, commissioning him to be a 'watchman', and as such to be responsible for the obedience of the community; and he sees, 'on the plain', the vision that he had seen before by the 'river'. This is immediately followed by the command to perform two symbolical and (at least as far as the second is concerned) distressing acts (vv. 1-3, 4-17). The first consists in making a sort of toy model of a siege, with a clay brick (to represent a city) and a flat plate or 'griddle' (to represent a wall) as a *sign* to the exiles ('the house of Israel'). The second is more serious and complicated. The prophet is bidden to lie upon his left side for 390 days—a length of time corresponding, he is told, to the iniquity of 'the house of Israel' (here the Northern kingdom) and then for 40 days on his right side (each day signifying a year) for the Southern kingdom. He is then told to prepare food, and ration himself for 390 days (there is no mention here of the other 40 days). The amount allowed is small, even for an abstemious Oriental; his water is rationed in the same way; and the fuel used is to be human excrement. Thus will be shown both the horrors of the siege and the pollution of life in the land of exile. The symbolical pollution is subsequently, in answer to the prophet's appeal, remitted, and he is allowed to prepare his food as the Hebrew fellahin (to judge from remains at Gezer), like Indian peasants to-day, usually prepared theirs. There is clearly a confusion between the iniquity of the past (Samaria had fallen a century and a quarter ago!) and the future exile of the Jews. This can be partly cleared up if we connect vv. 16, 17 with vv. 10, 11; and vv. 12-15 with v. 9, while v. 7 appears to belong to v. 3. Thus, if we put together vv. 7, 10, 11, 16, 17, we have a continuation of the episode of vv. 1-3; and the remainder suggests a reflection and perhaps a prediction.¹

¹ We may thus venture to reconstruct the text as follows: After the closing words of v. 3; 'this shall be a sign to the house of Israel', proceed (v. 7) 'And thou shalt set thy face toward the besieged Jerusalem, while thine arm is bare; and thou shalt prophesy against it. And thy food which thou shalt eat shall be weighed out, twenty shekels a day; on a given hour in each day shalt thou eat

But what of the two numbers? LXX has 190 instead of 390. The 40 years of Judah (in LXX as in MT) may be the years which are to follow the coming downfall of Jerusalem; they will then run coincidentally with part of the 190 years of Israel. What then of the 150 (190 minus 40) years? If we reckon from the first Northern deportation under Pekah (734), this would bring us to about 586. Did Ezekiel write down his experience then, i. e. some seven years after it had been received, and did he then expect that, now that the city had fallen, its desolation would last 40 years? Jeremiah had mentioned 70 years (xxv. 12, xxix. 10, if the passages are genuine). Ezekiel repeats the 40 in xxix. 11-13 (a passage written in 586) for *Egypt*.

It will be observed that (as elsewhere for the most part) the prophet says nothing about his carrying out the instructions. Did he expect his readers to take this for granted? He only expresses (here, but nowhere else) his personal unwillingness—perhaps the inbred sensitiveness of the Jewish priest; as we are told that, even under hypnotism, it is impossible to induce the patient to do what is contrary to his definite convictions. And what of the prolonged lying on one side on the ground? Clearly it is a time of extreme excitement for the prophet. The conviction has seized him that he is to announce the coming doom to the people, so that they may know that Jahveh is behind everything. It is by no means incredible (it would certainly not be so, in an Indian devotee) that he could spend the greater part of the day for half a year lying on the ground. Jahveh *laid bands* upon him (v. 8; cf. iii. 25). With this we may compare the ‘dumbness’ of ch. iii. 26, which seems to refer to some obstacle in his speaking (rather than an impediment in his speech), but which did not prevent his utterance.

CHAPTER VIII. With this chapter begins a further series of threats, dated Aug. 591. While sitting in his house with his friends, he becomes conscious of a human form wrapped in flame, which transports him to Jerusalem. There, at a spot in the Temple enclosure which he describes with accuracy, he is bidden to dig it. And thou shalt drink water measured out (rationed, as we should say); two pints, on a given hour each day. Moreover, he said to me, Son of man, I will break the staff of bread in Jerusalem, and they will weigh out the bread they eat with the utmost care; and in panic fear they will ration their water; that they may go short of bread and water, and be appalled, every one of them, and pine away in their iniquity.’ The remaining verses command the prophet to lie upon first one side and then the other (4-6), without turning (v. 8), with the materials for the food he is to eat (v. 9), and the loathsome manner of its preparation (vv. 12-15).

through a wall, and he finds himself in a room whose walls are covered with pictures, within which is a company of men performing some forbidden rite; he then sees a group of women celebrating the Babylonian rites of Adonis or Tammuz worship; and, afterwards, twenty-five men worshipping the sun. The experience ends with a terrible threat from his celestial guide.

1. *the hand of Jahveh fell*: the usual prelude of these experiences. The 'appearance' (v. 2) recalls that of ch. i. He comes to the north gate of the inner court, as might be expected if he had actually travelled from Babylon.

3. *image*: the word is used in 2 Chron. xxxiii. 7, 15, for Manasseh's Asherah. *Jealousy* (Exod. xx. 5; 1 Kings xix. 10) denotes specially the burning anger felt (by men or Jahveh himself) at any interference with the loyalty due from Israel to Jahveh.

5. *the glory of the God of Israel* (something more exalted than an angel) now conducts the prophet through the Temple.

8. *Dig*: such a wall would seem a temporary or recent one, but it must have been large.

11. *Shaphan* was the name of one of the leaders in the Deuteronomic reform.

12. The *chambers* may perhaps have been 'stalls' in the room; pictures on the wall remind us specially of Egypt.

14. *Tammuz*: the name occurs only here in the Old Testament. Tammuz was a vegetation god, supposed to die each year, and bewailed by the women; the worship is Babylonian, but goes back to early Sumerian times, and is akin to that spread over Asia Minor.

16. The sun-worship which the prophet sees, on returning to the inner court (v. 16), is probably due to Assyrian influence (2 Kings



*A Babylonian Madonna
A very rare specimen of Ishtar
nursing her son, Tammuz*

xxi. 3; Zeph. i. 5; Jer. viii. 2); naturally the worshippers turn to the East, although the shrine of the Temple was 'orientated' to the West.

17. *put the branch to their nose*: this seems, as the LXX version half suggests, to refer to something felt to be specially abominable. The prophet's vivid description, as if of an eye-witness, might be taken to suggest a sort of telepathy or second-sight; but all that he describes must have been familiar to him from what had gone on in Jehoiakim's reign; it is here, in his excitement, projected on his inner vision. This episode is followed by three others, in the first of which the population of the city is destroyed; in the second the divine glory leaves the doomed spot; in the third, after another scene of wickedness in Jerusalem (the order here is not chronological) Jahveh's glory mounts and crosses the valley of the Kidron, and the prophet's trance ends.

CHAPTER XVI. Chapter xii introduces a second cycle of threats; first, two dramatic representations of flight from the city (ch. xii); next, an outburst on the false prophets who were buoying up the hopes of the city with lies (chh. xiii, xiv. 1-11). The prophet then urges again the impossibility of escape, and gives a new turn of his own to the popular saying that the city was the cooking-pot, and the present inhabitants the good sound meat in it (chh. xiv. 12-23; xv). This is followed by a comprehensive arraignment of the whole history of the nation in ch. xvi. The fierce and, to our taste, sometimes coarse address is directed to Jerusalem (not Judah, or Israel). Jerusalem is first pictured as a foundling child, exposed in the desert, and rescued by Jahveh, who brings her up until she has blossomed into a beautiful girl; and he loads her with ornaments, until her fame is world-wide (vv. 1-14). Then (vv. 15-34) she plunges into a career of shameless vice, prostituting to her passions the lavish gifts she has received, not only pursued, but pursuing. The allegory is not altogether kept up (see v. 21) and v. 27 seems out of place; but in vv. 32 ff. the prophet gives rein to his disgust. Then comes vengeance, when Jahveh will assemble all the wretched woman's paramours; they will strip her bare and repay her favours and purchases with violence, until she is forcibly brought back to modesty (vv. 35-43).

The connexion with the first three chapters of Hosea is unmistakable (cf. especially Ezek. xvi. 10 ff., 19 ff., with Hos. ii). In fact, from Hosea onwards, the representation of the nation's disobedience as adultery is constant in the prophets, implying as it does a scandalous defiance both of right and of affection. Further, Ezekiel's view of the

past is darker than that of his predecessors. To them, Israel was at least true while she was in the desert (cf. Jer. ii. 2). Ezekiel makes no reference to the 'leal love' of Israel's youth. On the other hand, the reference to Jerusalem's mixed parentage (v. 3; cf. v. 45, contr. Deut. xxvi. 5) suggests that he may not be thinking of the origins of the nation, but of the actual history of the city, never really freed from its foreign traditions after its capture by David.

To the above, Ezekiel adds two more sections; the first comparing Jerusalem with her two 'sisters', an elder, Samaria (as more important and powerful), and a younger, strangely enough, Sodom! Their careers had been like her's (nothing is said about their original relation to Jahveh); but she had outdone them in shamelessness (vv. 44-54). The second, wherein the prophet predicts a restoration for all three sisters; for the first time, Jahveh's covenant is mentioned; but it is connected (characteristically enough) with the self-loathing that would follow upon forgiveness (cf. xxxvi. 24-31; xxxvii. 21-8, where the same thought is worked out; *after* restitution comes the real sorrow for sin). This allegory, which appears in a somewhat different form in ch. xxii (the two sisters, Judah and Samaria), is followed by the parable of the two eagles, the cedar and the vine, where Babylon appears as the object of the nation's treacherous dealing (ch. xvii); and the prophet passes to

CHAPTER XVIII. A carefully arranged discourse (as calm as the previous chapters have been excited) on individual responsibility. Ezekiel starts by quoting the common proverb about the fathers eating sour grapes (quoted also in Jer. xxxi. 29) and proceeds to demonstrate its error. The person who is the actual sinner, *he* shall die. He then considers a number of possible cases. First, the good and law-abiding man will live and not die (vv. 5-9). But if his son breaks the law, the son will die (vv. 10-13). But *his* son, if he is virtuous, will live (vv. 14-17). Thus sons do not inherit the punishment of their fathers (vv. 18-20). But if the wicked man repents, he will be saved (vv. 21-3); and if the virtuous man falls into evil, his previous life of virtue will be unable to save him (vv. 24-8). Hence, there is no injustice with Jahveh; let Israel therefore repent, and be forgiven (vv. 29-32). The allied question of the vicarious responsibility of the 'watchman' has already been considered in ch. xiv; and both are taken up again in ch. xxxiii (as it would seem, some six years later). Here there are two things to notice; first, what may be called the 'schematic' nature of Ezekiel's presentation; a man is either good or

bad, or else he changes completely from vice to virtue, or the reverse. No allowance is made for hereditary influence; and the marks of vice and virtue are both ritual and ethical; conventional taboos and moral laws are placed on the same footing, and must be regarded with the same conscientiousness. Second, this extreme doctrine of individualism, save for ch. xxxiii, exercises no further influence on the prophet's thought. Elsewhere, it is the nation or community which is regarded as the subject alike of punishment and mercy. Here, it is left to the individual to decide whether he will repent (as Pelagius might have held); elsewhere repentance and self-loathing are induced by the goodness of God (cf. Rom. ii. 4). The problem is regarded by Ezekiel, as if it had occurred to him for the first time, with entire detachment; and in working it out he thinks neither of the old traditions of the doom of Achan or the house of Saul, his own threats of universal destruction on old and young alike, or of such vicarious suffering as that of the Servant of Jahveh.

The chapter is followed by an elegy over the princes and over Judah; and the third cycle of threats begins (in ch. xx) with a parallel to ch. xvi, but without allegory, and ending, like ch. xvi, with an extended promise of restoration (cf. xx. 43 with xvi. 61, 63); after which we find four separate poems, each of them with the key-word, 'the sword!' (a) xxi. 1-7; (b) vv. 8-17; (c) vv. 18-27; (d) vv. 28-32.

(a) After a fragment of excited prophecy (which in the Hebrew is part of ch. xxi) against the Negeb or country in the south of Judah, the prophet hears himself rebuked as a mouther of riddles, and then he is bidden to threaten the whole land with the sword of Jahveh, which is to destroy its inhabitants indiscriminately—in spite of the differentiation in ch. xviii! The message overwhelms him with horror.

(b) The prophet's excitement rises; it is almost as if he was himself whirling a sword. He sees it flashing like the lightning (the last clause of v. 10 is corrupt). He smites upon his thigh in consternation. He sees two swords, and even three; he sees the sword reeking with the blood of those who are slain with it; it points to the doomed city, and turns threateningly from right to left, as Jahveh himself smites his hands together in fury.

(c) The mood of the next poem or stanza is different. The sword is now thought of as belonging to Nebuchadnezzar. His invading march has brought him to the parting of two roads; shall he proceed against Ammon, or Jerusalem? He consults the oracles with arrows, teraphim (oracular images), and liver (a common form of divination in Babylon). The decision is—'against Judah!' The Jerusalemites

hold it to be a lying oracle; but Jahveh's purpose cannot be turned. *Which have sworn oaths* (v. 23), probably corrupt; is there a concealed reference here to Judah's treachery? Then, taking up the phrase *bringing iniquity to remembrance* (v. 24), the prophet feels the frenzy coming upon him again, as he foretells the doom of Zedekiah, the wretched prince of the land.

(d) Another outburst; it repeats the key-words of the previous sword-song, as the prophet now turns to Ammon itself. But the excitement begins to die down; the sword is thought of as being replaced in its sheath; and the vagueness and generality of the language suggest that the poems are ending in exhaustion.

The end is now drawing near, and in the next two chapters the prophet again sums up the guilt of the nation, and then repeats in a somewhat different form his allegory of the wicked and adulterous women—Jerusalem and her elder sister Samaria. We then turn to

CHAPTER XXIV. This is dated as 1 Jan. 587, the day on which the final siege of Jerusalem commenced. The prophet is bidden to note the date, which he will verify later (cf. Jer. xxxii. 6 ff.). One is reminded of telepathic appearances, when the exact time of the apparition is noted, and is found later on to correspond to the time when the person who was seen passed away. Immediately the prophet thinks of the old figure of the city as the cauldron; but it takes two shapes; that of a pot into which flesh and bones are flung and boiled, till all is consumed, and last of all the pot itself (vv. 3-5, 10, 11), and that of the city, which, like a rusty pot, is defiled with blood and sin, and is fit for nothing but destruction (vv. 6-9). The verses would seem to call for rearrangement. Whether Ezekiel actually performed the action he describes is not clear; in any case, the allusion could hardly be mistaken (vv. 1-14).

We now approach (vv. 15-27) the most touching episode in the prophet's life. He is informed that the *desire of his eyes* is to be suddenly taken from him. But he is to show no sign of mourning. On the evening of the same day his wife dies. He does not mourn, nor eat the usual funeral food (the *bread of men*, v. 17). The reason he gives is that Jahveh (as has been communicated to him) will destroy the city and the Temple, and the miserable remnant will be too overcome to mourn; they will simply *pine away*. Afterwards, Jahveh adds to the prophet, the actual news will be brought by a fugitive; and then the dumbness (see p. 74) will be removed.

What lies behind this strangely reticent narrative? Hosea (if the usual interpretation is right) had learnt the love of Jahveh from his ruined marriage. Was Ezekiel to find a deeper conviction of the wrath of Jahveh from the loss of one for whom he uses a term of endearment unique in Hebrew literature? Was his wife's death sudden, or had he been steeling himself against it, till the certainty arrived? Did he find comfort in thus 'nationalizing' his own bereavement? Or was he at first half-paralysed by the blow, and then enabled to overcome it by the stern thought of the future paralysing grief of the people? The questions cannot be answered. It may be that Ezekiel is allowing us one glimpse into a tenderness of heart, ruthlessly repressed, not unlike that which Jeremiah shows us so pathetically. We can only say that Ezekiel also knew that when the blow had at last come, one part of the strain would be removed, and he would at last be able to speak freely. In this experience of his he found another sign that behind all his words was Jahveh's revelation.

With this sinister beginning of the months of the siege, the first part of the book comes to an end. The second opens with a group of prophecies against foreign nations. Such groups occur at the beginning of the prophecies of Amos, and also in Isaiah and Jeremiah, where few, if any, are to be attributed to the prophets themselves. Here the prophecies are certainly genuine; and the three oracles against Egypt are dated during the last six months of the siege. First come four brief oracles, against the four neighbours of Judah, Ammon, Moab, Edom, and the Philistines. Then two collections of more elaborate and highly imaginative oracles, against the two traditional allies of Judah, Tyre and Egypt, with a short oracle against Sidon, seven in all. Against Tyre and Egypt, Ezekiel rises to a height of invective (not unmixed, in our Massoretic text, with turgidity) and tragic irony that remind us of Aeschylus. We select two passages only.

In two long poems the destruction of Tyre is described, first as a matter of history, and then under the figure of a proud ship, breasting the high seas, and suddenly overwhelmed by the tempest. The detailed references to her allies and her commerce (she was the Venice of antiquity, and 'held the gorgeous East in fee') finds an echo in the description of the fall of the mystical Babylon, Rev. xviii. There follow two attacks on the Prince of Tyre, and here also, the second embodies a striking figure (ch. xxviii. 11-19). The prince is



PHOENICIAN SHIP

described as a semi-divine figure—a *cherub*—walking in the midst of the garden of Eden, in a blaze of precious stones, and a fanfare of music (v. 13). He dwells on the heavenly mountain, the abode of the gods; until his beauty becomes his snare, and he is cast down for his *unrighteousness* (vv. 14, 15, 17). The text is not certain; three times there occurs a word translated *cover*, which may refer to some peculiar sanctity; and it seems probable that the prince is not really the cherub, but is first placed with the cherub in the celestial dwelling, and is then expelled by the cherub for his pride. It is clear that we have here a reference to some myth; all its elements meet us in Babylonian literature; and we are also carried back to Gen. ii. It is interesting that on a Phoenician bronze bowl found at Delphi, probably of the eighth century, there is a representation of cherub-like creatures, with four legs and wings. The list of precious stones should be compared with that of the twelve stones on the High Priest's breast-plate (Exod. xxviii. 17-20; the LXX text comes nearer to this), and the foundations of the city in Rev. xxi. 19 f. Towards the end of the passage (vv. 16-19), the mention of *traffic* turns the prophet's thought gradually from figure to reality. The prophecy was not fulfilled. Later, Ezekiel apparently realized this. In his latest prophecy, dated 570, and inserted at the end of ch. xxix, he modifies it. Nebuchadnezzar had 'slaved' against Tyre; he had no wages for his labours therefrom; therefore he had to go to Egypt instead to get them.

He then turns to Egypt; here he begins with a comprehensive threat of destruction (ch. xxix), and after a group of short poems, he pictures Pharaoh as an enormous tree, felled to the ground (ch. xxxi), and then as a dragon in the seas (xxxii. 1-16). The last poem, dated nearly two years after the fall of the city (xxxii. 17-32), is unequalled for its weird horror by anything in the Old Testament. It describes the entrance of Pharaoh with his army into Sheol. Ezekiel's conception of Sheol, more detailed than any other in the O. T. (cf. its imitation in Is. xiv, see p. 134), challenges comparison with that of the Odyssey (bk. XII) or the famous sixth book of the Aeneid. The mightiest nations of the past are there—Assyria and Elam, Meshech and Tubal, Edom, the 'princes of the North', and Sidon. Tyre strangely enough is not mentioned here, nor, of course, is Babylon (contr. Is. xiv. 4, p. 134). The text is often uncertain; but there seems a clear distinction between Sheol, where the warriors of the past lie with their arms by their sides, and the *pit*, to which the despised dead are flung, amidst the surprise and contempt of the armed hosts

who watch their descent. It must be remembered that by the beginning of the sixth century before Christ the fall of Assyria, following on that of Elam and other empires of the past, had left the impression of a world from which old evil powers had been swept away, and only Egypt and Tyre remained. They were doomed. Babylon, apparently, was accepted by the prophet as the instrument of Jahveh. The literary effect is increased by the repetition of the sonorous phrases *uncircumcised, slain by the sword*, &c. It would be precarious to derive from this passage a reasoned conception of Sheol, still more of the life beyond the grave. It is poetry, not theology. The thought of survival after death is not to be expected in one who regards nations as the units in God's dealings with the world; and Ezekiel's individualism in ch. xviii never passed beyond this present life. Here the prophet is satisfied with poetic and traditional forms, as in ch. xxviii (vv. 8, 14, &c.); a clearer note is struck in ch. xxxvii.

CHAPTER XXXIII. With this chapter begins a new section of the book. After another discussion of the old problems of the watchman, and of individual responsibility (see p. 77), the prophet describes the arrival of the news of the city's fall (vv. 21-33); his dumbness is removed, and the next four chapters contain a systematic doctrine of restoration and forgiveness—a veritable 'plan of salvation'. After July 586 the necessity for denunciation was over; the prophet had now to begin his second task, of reconstruction. The news reached the exiles probably in Jan. 585 (for *twelfth* v. 21, read 'eleventh'). We can with difficulty suppose that the first news of the catastrophe would come to Babylon through a Hebrew fugitive as long as six months after the event; what moves Ezekiel at this moment is the visit of one of his own countrymen from the scene of the disaster. In the evening, before the man's arrival, Ezekiel falls into another trance or ecstasy. In the morning (for *until* v. 22, read 'when') the dumbness was finally removed (cf. ch. iii. 26, ch. xxiv. 27). But his first words exactly echo the old denunciations against Palestine. The reason is not far to seek. After the city's capture, some form of government had been organized by the Babylonians under Gedaliah, the firm friend of Jeremiah, and the distressed country seemed to breathe once more. But Ezekiel had no faith in the survivors. The new régime would be no better than the old. The country would not escape the destruction which he had foretold under Zedekiah. As a matter of fact, Gedaliah was murdered within a few months of his investiture, and his associates, fearing some such fate

as Ezekiel had described, and against the strong remonstrance of Jeremiah, fled into Egypt. Did the fugitive's conversation with Ezekiel awaken this outburst? He proceeds (vv. 28-33) 'when the land is finally desolate, they will believe in Jahveh, and in me; till then, they think me no more than a professional musician'—as if this were the first effect of the restoration of his full power of speech! We now pass to

CHAPTER XXXIV, 20-31. The mood of denunciation has not yet ended. In an address strongly reminiscent of Jer. xxiii Ezekiel turns to the *shepherds*, the influential men, priestly and lay, who had exploited and oppressed the people. There would now be many of these around him among the newly arrived captives. But the thought of their brutality and selfishness brings another thought, of the deliverance of the sheep. The delinquencies of the shepherds have meant the tyranny of the stronger animals over the weaker (*cattle* means simply animals of the flock). This is to cease, and the whole flock is to have a single shepherd, David (vv. 20-4). Observe, however, that David is not to be king; Ezekiel has no place for the monarchy; and David is simply Jahveh's 'servant'. But his rule is to mean complete absence of danger (v. 25), kindly seasons and prosperous crops (v. 26). Then at last, when he has thus delivered them, they will recognize Jahveh (v. 27). The new régime (*plantation*) will be renowned far and wide, and the prophecy of Jeremiah will be fulfilled, 'I will be their God and they shall be my people' (Jer. xxxi. 33).

CHAPTER XXXV contains a prophecy of destruction against Edom (Mount Seir). At first sight this seems out of place; why was it not inserted between chh. xxv and xxxii? Its place, however, is rightly here, because the destruction of Edom is a further assurance of the safety (ch. xxxiv. 28) of Israel. This is made clear in ch. xxxvi. 1-15, where 'the mountains of Israel' are told that, after so long lying under the 'shame of the heathen', they are to be the home of a prosperous agricultural community. The ideal of Ezekiel is social rather than political; he desires no military rule over other nations; and here he is in entire harmony with Jeremiah. And now follows the passage wherein the 'plan of salvation' is explicitly stated.

CHAPTER XXXVI, 16-36. Jahveh's fury was inevitable; Israel's sins forced him to disperse his people (vv. 17-19). But in their exile

his name was profaned, as if he were a god who could not protect his worshippers (v. 20). Then, to restore his name to its proper reverence (to 'hallow' it where it had been 'profaned', v. 23), Jahveh will reassemble the exiles, set them in their own country, and purify them with clean water. The mental attitude and the spirit of their life is to be changed, and they are to be obedient (vv. 24-8). The new state will be one of piety, affluence, and political security (vv. 29, 30). Then will follow a deeper change, shame and self-loathing for the past (v. 31). Thus cleansing and restoration will be simultaneous, and, whereas the exile meant the dishonouring of Jahveh by the heathen, the new prosperity will force them to recognize him (vv. 32-6).

This remarkable passage will remind the reader of Rom. ii. 4; 'the goodness of God is leading thee to repentance'. But Ezekiel is at once more elaborate and less penetrating than Paul. In spite of the language of ch. xxxiv, there is no real tenderness in Ezekiel's conception of Jahveh—none of the *hesed* or loving faithfulness of Hosea or the Psalmist. The mainspring of the whole process is the necessity that Jahveh's name should receive due honour. The actual stages in the process have a distinct psychological interest. The Jews are to be purified when they have been recalled from the lands of exile—to Ezekiel's priestly mind, purification would hardly be possible before; with this goes repentance, in its New Testament sense of a change of mind and attitude; but this is Jahveh's gift, as is the subsequent obedience—here Ezekiel might be a precursor of Augustine. Next come plenty and wealth; and this unwonted experience awakes what is now generally meant by repentance, the 'godly sorrow for sins past'. The picture of Jahveh will be neither attractive nor convincing to readers of the Second Isaiah and the Fourth Gospel; but Ezekiel was too deeply impressed by the outraged majesty of Jahveh to understand his love; and it must be remembered that for Ezekiel a deliverance which was grounded on Jahveh's reverence for his own name supplied a firmer assurance for the benefits that he was to confer on Israel than anything which could have sprung from Israel's own conduct. The Calvinistic attitude of mind which regards God's honour as the supreme and final ground for every event in history has always been accompanied by an unswerving trust in God Himself.

CHAPTER XXXVII, 1-14. But for Ezekiel, or at least for his countrymen (v. 11), that trust is not yet complete. The nation, in

those early bitter days of exile, seemed no more than a collection of dried-up bones. How could they come to life and fulfil these daring predictions? Such is the question which is answered in one of the most arresting of all Ezekiel's visions. He finds himself in a valley, filled, as if it were some ancient battle-field, with men's bones. He is made to walk up and down among them (as the tense of the verb shows). Can they come to life? Only Jahveh knows. He is then bidden to tell them that they will turn into living bodies. With a thrilling roar, the bones move together and they become human bodies, but motionless. Then he is bidden to call on the wind; it 'breathes' on the bodies, and the whole army comes alive and stands upright upon the field. Jahveh's interpretation follows. What the prophet has seen is the nation. Are they no better than dried-up bones? The graves will be opened, and the nation will be brought home. Jahveh's spirit will be placed in them, and their restoration will be accomplished. 'Thus', adds the divine speaker (and this is always for Ezekiel the important result), 'ye shall know that I am Jahveh'. The force of the allegory is increased when we remember that in the Hebrew, 'spirit', 'wind', 'breath' are represented by one and the same word (even in v. 9). The repetition in vv. 12-14 shows the prophet's eagerness. But there is clearly no thought of a bodily resurrection. The bones lie unburied in the open field; it is the nation, still alive, though buried in exile, which is to come up out of its graves. Nor is there any reference to Sheol; the prophet is not now thinking of the scene of xxxii. But the confidence which was later on to give birth to the belief in a rising from the dead is really one with the confidence of this chapter. The purpose of God could not be frustrated, even though ruin and despair had to be faced and conquered.

Israel can now dwell at peace; but as if the prophet still feared the irruption of the wild and savage forces on the fringe of his world, there follow two visions of Gog, whose hordes sweep over the settled land, only to be destroyed there by the direct power of Jahveh, so establishing for evermore the universal recognition of Jahveh's supremacy (chh. xxxviii, xxxix).

We now come to the great vision of the last nine chapters of the book. It is dated thirteen years after the passage beginning ch. xxxiii. 21, the only restoration prophecy which is dated at all. What had happened during the interval? A study of the vision may help to answer the question. The prophet is placed on the top of a mountain in Palestine, and beholds the Temple, in appearance

like a city, opposite him towards the south. A radiant figure at the gate summons him; they enter, and proceed to measure the whole building, which the prophet thus thoroughly surveys; the outer court, its gate-houses and its chambers; the inner court and its gate-houses; the Temple-house itself with its portico and its outer and inner chambers, its enormously thick walls with cells inserted in them, its ornamentation of palm-trees and cherubs, the chambers for the priests in its immediate vicinity; and lastly the whole Temple area. The vision ends with the appearance of the glory of Jahveh, who now comes to take up his dwelling in the house whence he was seen to depart some twenty years before. Then we proceed to the shape of the great altar, the duties of the priests, the redistribution of the sacred territory, the functions of the civil head of the community, various new sacrifices, and lastly the description of the river that was seen to flow from underneath the threshold of the shrine, and the allotment of the whole land among the restored tribes.

Was this a vision in the same sense as the earlier visions? The prophet's language in describing it is the same, except that there are no references to actual trance experiences. On the other hand, the details and measurements seem incompatible with such a hypothesis; but the course of the new river and the strips of land assigned to the tribes demand such a reversal of natural conditions in Palestine that one is tempted to think of it here as a dream country.

On closer examination, however, these nine chapters are seen not to be homogeneous. We are dealing with what is clearly a literary unity in chh. xl-xliii. 12. Ezekiel is going over the whole Temple area with his guide, interested mainly in the shape and form and dimensions of the buildings therein, rather than in their functions. The vision appropriately closes with the sight of the glory of the Jahveh, and the divine command then given to the prophet to reveal the plan to the community. The rest of the chapter, dealing with the altar and its *ordinances*, reads like a piece of the legislation of the Priestly Code, as also do xlv. 18-25 and xlv. 1-15, dealing with the festivals and with the offerings of the *prince*, the new civil head of the community. This individual, however, does not appear in P, and is as far as we know the special creation of Ezekiel. Chh. xlv, xlv. 1-17 (with the exception of a few verses which seem misplaced) are concerned with the priests, their functions and ceremonial limitations or taboos, the religious estates set apart for the revenues of the clergy, including the city, which is to be the common possession of the whole nation; and the section concludes with the proper scale of

weights and measures and the amount of the Temple tax, naturally dependent on it. The priesthood, it will be noted, is to be confined to the family of Zadok. Deuteronomy had allowed the country priests, dispossessed from their local shrines, to do duty at the altar in Jerusalem; but the priests of the capital had actually prevented this. Ezekiel's plan, that the ranks of the established clergy should be still further limited, was not carried out. In the later legislation, other priests known as the family of Ithamar are recognized as legitimate. In the second half of ch. xlvii are two sections, on gifts to be made by the prince, and on the places for boiling the sacrifices, which read like afterthoughts, and are quite detached from their context. Chapter xlvii. 1-12, the description of the marvellous river, flowing over the hills from the Temple shrine to the Dead Sea, and carrying life with it wherever it goes, brings us back to the atmosphere of the first vision; while the remainder of the book, introduced by the words, 'thus hath Jahveh God said' (cf. ch. xlv. 9, 18; ch. xlvii. 1, 16: contrast chh. xlv. 1; xlvii. 19; xlvii. 1) is quite in the manner of the Book of Numbers (P), and has nothing of the vision about it.

It is now easier to understand the genesis of these nine chapters (and, incidentally, to see that we cannot simply dismiss them, with Hölscher, as later accretions). The kernel is to be found in the two sections xl-xliii. 12 and xlvii. 1-12. Probably xliii. 1-12 forms its concluding section.

Here Ezekiel is influenced by three things, his memories of the Temple of Solomon at Jerusalem, his familiarity with Babylonian art and architecture, and his own sense of symmetry and, generally, of what pertains to the holy. Symmetry would itself appear to have been a marked feature of Babylonian temple architecture, and the innovations of Ezekiel, notably the complete separation of the Temple from the city, can be readily explained by his determination to avoid the chance of pollution, such as was only too possible in the old Temple. Did he also receive the measurements in the vision? The analogy of Gudea's dream can hardly justify us in answering that he did.¹ Doubtless, the vision suggested certain proportions and relations; and these would be readily worked out as the vision was set down. The vision of the sacred river is reproduced at the climax of the vision of the Apocalypse. Two things, however, are worth noting;

¹ An inscription of King Gudea, c. 3000 B.C., relates his dream in which three divine beings bade him build a temple and actually gave him the plan; a well-known statue of the king shows him seated with the plan upon his lap, and the measuring-scale at its side.



A conjectural model of Solomon's Temple

which, except for the greater symmetry in Ezekiel's plan, will suggest much of the external appearance of the Temple of Ezekiel's vision

in Ezekiel, the breadth and height of the shrine are equal, but the length is double; in the Apocalypse, the length and the breadth and the *height* of the *city* are equal. In Ezekiel the leaves on the trees that grow by the side of the river are medicinal; in the Apocalypse, they are for the healing *of the nations*.

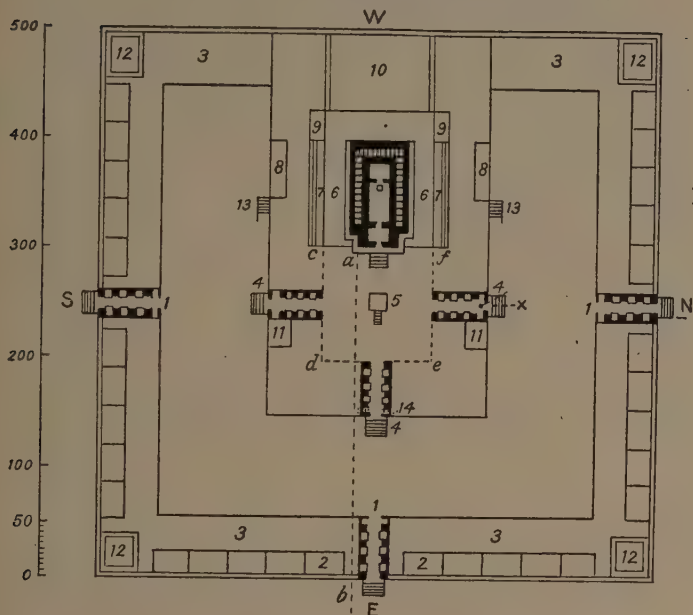
The sections on the priests and the prince appear to be later, though doubtless both by Ezekiel himself. He is here once more an innovator. But his scheme for the restriction of the priesthood was not taken up; and still less, in the Jerusalem after the exile, was there a place for such an official as his prince. It will be observed that Ezekiel does not look for a Messiah. The term he uses does not suggest royalty at all; it might suit Nehemiah; it would not suit Zerubbabel. David, in chh. xxxiv. 24, xxxvii. 24, is not called king, but prince, as here. The future community is to be a republic; for the kingly line (see chh. xliii. 7, xlv. 9) Ezekiel had no further respect. Nothing is said about the prince's duties, save as he is the representative of the worshipping people; all the authority that Ezekiel cares about seems to be vested in the priests; in politics he has no interest; and, after the destruction of Gog, and the entrance of Jahveh into the Temple, there can properly speaking be no politics at all.

The section on the altar, whether by Ezekiel or not, appears to be independent. There is no introduction in ch. xliii. 13, and only the shortest in v. 18. But with the shape here sketched later practice agreed; it remained square. The Herodian altar, according to the Mishnah, consisted of squares (though only three) placed *on* squares. Whether the remaining sections (ch. xlvi. 16-24, ch. xlvii. 13-xlviii) are to be attributed to Ezekiel cannot be decided. At all events, there is nothing to make them a part of the original vision. They read like pieces of legislation which might have been inserted (but were not) in the Priestly Code. If P (see p. 59) was the result of long thought and discussion in priestly circles in Babylon, it is wholly probable that there would be several drafts of ceremonial law; some such appear to be collected into the second half of Leviticus (which has close similarities to Ezekiel xlv-xlvi). Those which were rejected may in some cases have found a home by insertion in the later chapters of Ezekiel. The supposition of a previous stage of wandering would be all the more probable from the highly uncertain nature of their text (MT as compared with LXX).

We can thus see how the chapters probably came together. Records of the genuine vision are joined to careful theorizing. The

PLAN OF EZEKIEL'S TEMPLE

(The unit of measurement is Ezekiel's cubit, probably about 21 in.)



1. Gates into outer court (3), xl. 6.
2. Chambers in outer court (30), xl. 17.
3. Pavement, xl. 18.
4. Gates into inner court (3), xl. 28.
5. Altar of burnt offering, xliii. 13.
6. 'Separate place', xli. 10.
7. Larger blocks, containing priests' chambers, xlii. 1.
8. Smaller do., xlii. 1.
9. Priests' kitchens (?2), xlvi. 19.
10. Hinder building, xli. 12.

11. Chambers for priests (2), xl. 44.
12. People's kitchens (4), xlvi. 21.
13. Priests' steps from outer to inner court, xlii. 9.

At 14 are shown the positions of the sacrificial tables at the east inner gate, xl. 41.

The dotted line *a...b* represents the course of the Temple stream, xlvii. 1.

Ezekiel does not mention whether there was any wall corresponding to the conjectural line *c-d-e-f*.

process, though carried on subsequently to Ezekiel himself, is yet typical of these later years of the prophet. During the thirteen years in Babylon after the fall of the city, the old love for the Temple (which had only filled him with loathing before, as he thought of its actual degradation) arose again. He had never implied, like his predecessors, that sacrifices were of no account in the eyes of Jahveh. And he had treated ritual sins as if they were as important as immorality. Moreover, his very attacks on the uses to which the Temple was put, show how it occupied his thoughts, as it never occupied the thoughts of Jeremiah or even Isaiah. Now, in the midst of the purified nation, it becomes the necessary condition for Jahveh's presence. This is what may be called the 'Babylonian' point of view. Unknown before the exile, either to the best or the worst sections of the community, it was not suspected by the descendants of the Jews who remained in Palestine after 586. They were eager enough, on occasion, to have their Temple; but for the scrupulous 'holiness' without which, to Ezekiel, the Temple itself was worthless, they cared little. To impress this upon Judaism was the work of the immigrants who returned with Nehemiah and Ezra.

Yet to the last Ezekiel remained what he had always been, the prophet who received direct messages from Jahveh for the guidance of Israel, and who, in the time of his people's bewilderment and disaster, kept alive their faith and rekindled their hopes. He was at once the representative and the preserver of all that was best in Judaism. 'It was Ezekiel who saw the glorious vision, which was showed him upon the chariot of the cherubims, and directed them that went right.' (Ecclus. xlix. 8, 9.)

BOOK OF LAMENTATIONS

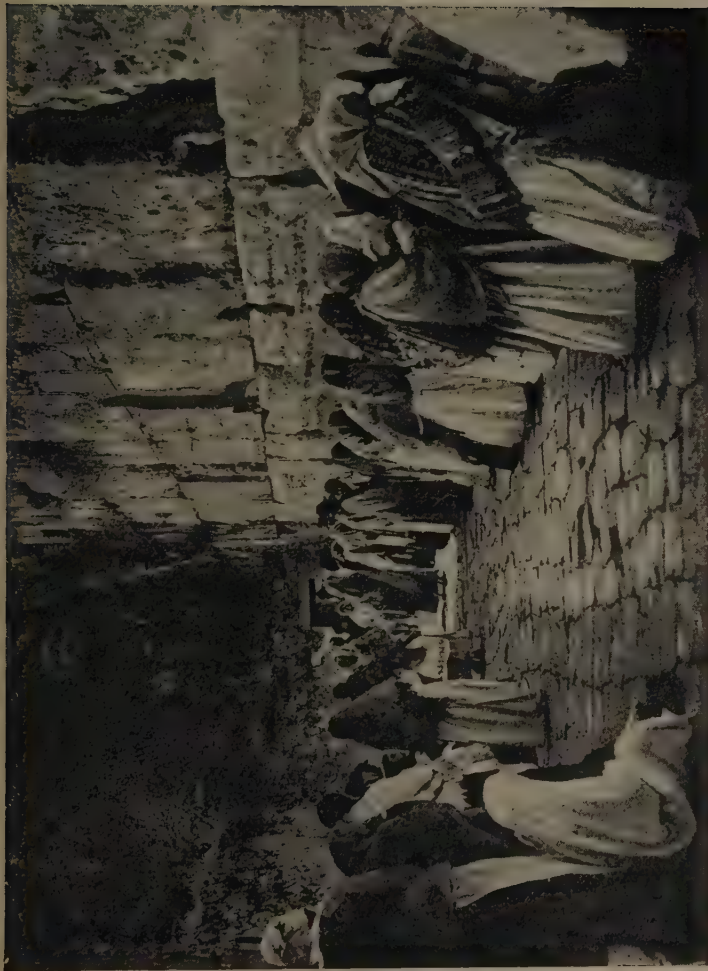
THIS little book appears in the Hebrew Bible in the middle of what are called the five 'Rolls' (the others are Song of Songs, Ruth, Esther, and Ecclesiastes) in the third and last section of the Canon. It bears no name there, but is simply known by its first word, *Ekah!* or 'How!' Its metre, however, is that of the dirge (Hebrew *qinah*, the most clearly marked and easily recognized of all the Hebrew metres—alternating verses of more and fewer accents (generally three and two), and the later Jews spoke of the book, therefore, as 'Dirges'; this was represented in the Septuagint by the corresponding Greek word *Threni*, and in English, accordingly, as 'Lamentations'. It should be remembered, however, that in Hebrew the word refers as much to the metre as to the character of the composition to which it is applied.

The book consists of five poems, the first four of which are acrostics. In the third, the verses are grouped in threes, the first three beginning with the first letter of the Hebrew alphabet, and so on; in the rest, each verse begins with a separate letter, and it is worth noting that in chapters iii and iv the usual order of two of the letters is reversed. Chapters i, ii, and iv deserve their name, ii and iv especially give the most vivid pictures of the ruin of the city, but ch. iii is a lament of a much more general tone, and might suit any age of misfortune. The fifth chapter is not in acrostic form, though the metre is still that of the 'dirge' or *qinah* (to give it its Hebrew name). It is a prayer of confession which, like chapter iii, would be suitable to various periods, both before and after the fall of Jerusalem in 586 (cf. the reference to Egypt and Assyria in v. 6; such references, however, do not fix the date as being before 600 B.C.).

In view of the above, chapters ii and iv may well be contemporary. The vividness and detail of the language certainly suggest the eyewitness. They remind us in this respect of the description of the drought in Jer. xiv. Chapter i is different. The bitterness of the actual crash of 586 seems to have passed. There are no reminiscences of those dark days. On the other hand, a period of reflection has set in; the poet recognizes that the disaster is a punishment (vv. 8, 12) although there is more

of complaint than of repentance in the poem. But there is nothing of the buoyancy of Second Isaiah, with his conviction that the sins of the past are more than atoned for, and that the sky is bright with glowing hopes. On the other hand, if we push back the chapter to the middle of the exile (i. e. 560-50) we cannot but wonder why the author was uninfluenced by the vision of Ezekiel. The exiles, it would seem, could not have formed a single homogeneous community. Chapter iii is full of the language of the later Psalms (see notes below); there is nothing (not even vv. 46-8) which suggests the distinctive experiences of 586, nor indeed of the exile as such. The description points to the troubles of the Jews in Palestine rather than in the comparative ease and safety of Babylon, but the community, though in great distress, has not been ruined (v. 22). The fifth chapter appears to be an appendix, added to the rest simply because, like them, it was a *qinah*, rather than for any connexion with the fall of the city. If it were to be referred to the years following 586, it would be far more appropriate on the lips of the survivors in Judah, after the murder of Gedaliah, than of Ezekiel's companions in Babylon. But the religious intensity of the poem points to a later date.

It is evident, therefore, that Jeremiah cannot be regarded as the author of the book. There is nothing indeed in the Hebrew text, or title, to suggest that he was; the attribution first meets us in the Septuagint (it will be remembered that in the Psalms the LXX goes considerably farther than the Hebrew Psalter in identifying individual Psalms with David). A rather unscientific basis for the attribution, however, may be found in 2 Chron. xxxv. 25, where Jeremiah's lament over Josiah is mentioned; we have laments from Jeremiah over other kings in Jer. xxii, and in view of the rather superficial judgement which has seen in Jeremiah the 'weeping prophet', such an attribution was not unnatural. But Jeremiah's attitude to the fall of the city was entirely different. With these dirges he could have had no sympathy at all. To him the event was a consequence of all the previous history of the nation; he had foreseen it all along, and the tone of bewildered and paralysing sorrow would have been impossible for him. The dirges in fact show how little the lesson of the prophets had been comprehended by some quite deeply religious Jews, and we can best understand them if we think of them as expressing the attitude of numb despair against which Ezekiel had to protest and Second Isaiah levelled his ardent exhortations.



*The Jews' waiting place at Jerusalem
Outside the great western wall of the Temple area*

NOTES ON LAMENTATIONS

CHAPTER II. 8-22. The *qinah* metre, though naturally concealed in a translation, can sometimes be recognized without much difficulty in the Revised Version.¹ Each of the three lines in the verse is split up in the Hebrew into a longer and a shorter half (reminding one of the 'common metre' in English hymn books). After describing the hostility of Jahveh to his people and his land (1-7), the poem passes to the desolation of every class in the community (8-10) especially the misery of the young children (11 f.). Such sorrow is past comfort, and the prophets (what of Jeremiah?—or is the poet thinking of Jeremiah's opponents?) have uttered empty hopes but no diagnosis (13 f.). Surrounding nations are full of exultation at Jahveh's treatment of his people (15-17). The poem ends with a cry of anguish, as the piteous fate of young and old, priest and prophet, mother and infant in the terrible famine (v. 20) is felt to be the result of Jahveh's own dread anger. The author would seem to have listened both to Jeremiah and to Ezekiel; the former would suggest the agonizing thought of Jahveh's relentless wrath; vv. 11 and 14 echo Jeremiah distinctly, and *My terror on every side* recalls a favourite phrase of his. Verses 9 and 14 also recall Ezekiel's insistence on the vanished vision of the false prophets, and v. 15 uses a striking phrase which Ezekiel had used of the proud and self-confident Tyre. The acrostic may seem a strange form for passionate lyric poetry such as this; but passion is quite consistent with stringent artistic conditions of metre and rhyme; originally the alphabetic arrangement may have been intended as a mnemonic, and then continued as a convention. Verse 19, it will be noticed, has an extra line.

¹ For example i. 1

How lies the city forlorn
Once so populous!
To a widow hath she been turned
The Ládý among nátions!
Princéss among the, próvinces
Nów mere lóot!

Or, ii. 8

Jahvéh has plánned to fling dówn
The wáll of Zíon;
He strétched the line and he sét
His hánd to destróy;
He makes rámpart and wáll lámént;
Tógether they lánguish.



AT PETRA, THE CAPITAL OF EDOM
Façade of Isis' Temple cut in the rock

CHAPTER IV. 1-15. Another poignant lament. The gold of our former estate is no more than earthenware (1 f.). Human beings have grown more callous than the brutes (3-5), and, by a sin more terrible than that of Sodom, beauty is become ashes (6-8). Better to have perished than to have known mothers feeding on their own babies (9 f.)! It is Jahveh's anger; our incredible fate is because of our sins (11-13); and now they treat us as if we were lepers (14 f.). Then follows a long wail of despair (16-20), ending in an expression of the familiar and deep-rooted hatred of Edom (the centre of *Schadenfreude*), and, by a surprising but not unnatural transition of thought, the confidence that Edom will be punished and Zion afflicted no more. This poem, too, is in the sphere of the ideas of Jeremiah and Ezekiel; all the suffering is the result of their sin; and their sin deserved it all (cf. Ezek. xvi. 46). The similes drawn from the animal creation are just in the manner of Jeremiah, but it is strange that there should be no hint of a prophet who was not deluded. The most ghastly scenes of the siege (hardly alluded to by Jeremiah) have evidently obsessed the poet's mind like a nightmare (vv. 4, 5, 10). The 'uncleanness' of the victims reminds us of Ezekiel, though Ezekiel (the priest) is more formal. The change from despair to hate is startling (vv. 20 f.); but the poet's fierce glare at Edom gives him his one touch of hope (v. 22; cf. Is. xl. 2, lxiii. 5).

CHAPTER III. 1-66. A long description of suffering, as due to Jahveh, who refuses to hear the sufferer's prayers, and attacks him like a wild animal or a hostile warrior, or like a tyrant driving his victim into the most miserable exile (1-18). By another sudden movement of thought the poet flings out a prayer, and the clouds are immediately shot through with light (19-24). Jahveh will always reward patience; the deepest humiliation must therefore be endured with hope; it has its purpose and will end in the vindication of the righteous (25-36). If we are being punished, we must ask for pardon. The punishment has been bitter; but so have been our laments; and prayer at the darkest hour has brought deliverance (37-57). With confidence in this vindication that rises into exultant triumph, the poem closes (58-66).

The poem begins strangely with *I am the man*; but the author is not thinking of his individual sufferings, if we may take the poem as a whole; like so many of the Psalmists, he passes easily from the singular to the plural. Verse 52, side by side with, e.g., vv. 46-8, implies that singular and plural mean the same thing. Yet it is when the writer thinks of the community rather than of himself that he

appears to find hope. Resemblances to Jeremiah are numerous but superficial; of the stern morality of Jeremiah, or of his distinctive conception of the need of an inward change of heart, there is no word. And although a tendency to brood over sorrow is often seen in Jeremiah, we have no trace of it in what is recorded of his old age after the fall of the city, either before or after the melancholy journey into Egypt. The calm piety and hopefulness of vv. 22 ff. is wholly different from the passionate emotional contrasts revealed in Jeremiah's personal intercourse with Jahveh. There seems to be a clear allusion to Is. l. 6 in v. 30; and echoes of the Psalms are constant.

OBADIAH

THIS fragment of prophecy consists of a single outburst of hate against Edom. The hatred between Judah and Edom is one of the most constant features of the Old Testament. It is reflected in the Jacob stories of the Pentateuch (E, but more fully J); in the grim pictures of Amos, i. 9, 11; Jer. xlix, 7-22; Lam. iv. 21; Mal. i. 2 ff.; and Is. lxiii (q. v.). There was indeed a constant rivalry between Judah and the wild tribes to the south, separated from Judah by no recognizable frontier, a rivalry all the more bitter, it may be, because of the belief in a community of race. Edom had been subdued by David, and again by Amaziah, but neither conquest was permanent. A kindlier tone is discernible in Deut. (ii. 4-7, xxiii. 7-9), perhaps because the political relations between the two states in the seventh century were easier; the Deuteronomists reserve their fiercer antagonisms for Moab and Ammon (xxiii. 3-6). And Edom itself, though alien, was often spoken of as a dwelling of Jahveh the inhabitant of the dread wilderness (Deut. xxxiii. 2, Judges v. 4).

When the political independence of Judah came to an end in 586, Edom invaded the now defenceless and partly depopulated but still desirable territory. Their help had naturally been looked for in the various coalitions formed against Assyria and Babylon, but in Jerusalem's last struggles Edomites appear to have been among the troops that Nebuchadnezzar dispatched against the revolting city, and their callous opportunism was never forgotten in a land where rivalries were as fierce and memories as long as in the Balkans.

In the sixth century also there took place a northern movement of Arabs (the population of Arabia has periodically overflowed its borders). Ezekiel (xxv. 4, 5, 10) regards this as a punishment for Moab, Ammon, and Edom, who were all affected, but it also increased their pressure upon Judah, and would inevitably tend to keep up the old animosity. Much of the book of Obadiah appears in the prophecy against Edom in Jer. xlix; vv. 1-4 are identical with Jer. xlix. 14-16; 5 with xlix. 9; 6 with xlix. 10 a; 8 with xlix. 7; 9 with xlix. 22 b. Verse 17 reappears in Joel ii. 32. Unfortunately the dates of both Jer. xlix and of Joel are quite uncertain, and it is difficult to tell whether the book of Obadiah has followed or led the way. Quite possibly, with the identity of Is. ii. 1-4 and Micah iv.

2-4 in mind, we should suppose that all three passages point to the existence of a number of floating oracles against Edom, whose origin was unknown, but which were kept alive by the appeal of their subject-matter, and collected more than once.

If the little oracles are somewhat re-arranged as they stand in Obadiah, they fall easily into three groups:

(a) *Judgement*, vv. 2, 3, 7 a, 10-14, with which we may join 4-6, 7 b, 15. Proud and confident in its eyrie, the nation will be brought down, betrayed by its own allies (v. 7), as a ruthless punishment for its own betrayal of Judah; let it learn wisdom for the future. Verse 13 is an allusion to the many Jews who tried more or less successfully to escape capture by the Babylonians, referred to in Jer. xl. 12, and to return when conditions grew more settled.

(b) *Prophecy*, vv. 8, 9, 18 b, 19 a, 21. Warrior and wise man alike (the wisdom of Edom was proverbial; Eliphaz, the worthiest of Job's friends, came from Teman) will be destroyed, Edom will be exterminated, and the Arabs (cf. Ezekiel, xxv, 10, 'the children of the East', here *they of the South*) will push their way in, and finally the territory will revert to Judah and Jahveh. It is noteworthy, perhaps, that only in these verses and in v. 6 is Edom spoken of as Esau.

(c) *Eschatology*, vv. 16, 17, 18 a, 19 b, 20. Here there is no specific reference to Edom. In the midst of the world catastrophe, Jerusalem will be an asylum and then a destructive force, and the exiles of the past will be the conquerors of the future.

THE 'SERVANT SONGS'

Is. xlii. 1-4, xlix. 1-6, l. 4-9, lii. 13-14.

THERE are four passages scattered through Is. xl-lv ('Second Isaiah') in which we meet with a very striking conception of the 'Servant of Jahveh'. In those chapters the term is applied now to Cyrus, now to the exiled and waiting nation of Israel. But the subject of these four poems is spoken of in terms only applicable to an individual who is very different from the great Persian conqueror, and the style of the poems is not only descriptive but narrative and even dramatic. No part of the Old Testament has been more vigorously discussed, and on no subject have the conclusions been more varied and even contradictory. It is impossible in the following few pages adequately to summarize the different views; the writer can but give that which he holds to be the most probable, referring as he does so to others which have high authority or plausibility behind them.

Each of the poems is introduced suddenly, though at its close it is linked on to what follows in such a way as to make the actual conclusion of the poem doubtful. But if the poems are read continuously, making allowance for this, they present four scenes in what seems clearly one career. In the first, Jahveh speaks, describing his choice and call of his servant in terms which seem to imply a quiet but unbroken success. In the second, the Servant is himself the speaker. He is going about his divinely appointed work; he has known discouragement; but he is comforted by a larger conception of his task than apparently he had before comprehended. In the third, too, the Servant speaks. He has now understood his task and felt his dependence on Jahveh more profoundly. He has been tempted to shirk his duty, he has had to suffer open and cruel opposition, but he is now ready to defy every foe. The fourth song is more elaborate, and contains ideas so far in advance of the others that it has led some to suspect a difference of authorship. There is more than one speaker. Jahveh himself begins and ends the song; in the middle the poet uses the first person plural, perhaps as representing the perplexed Israelite community watching the Servant, perhaps as the nations of the world for whom the Servant is performing his appointed work; perhaps as both (see notes *ad loc.*). This fourth song makes it clear that

the sufferings of the Servant were inflicted by God rather than by human beings ; that they were seen (perhaps too late) to be the penalty not for his own sins but for those of others (the speakers) ; that he was put to death with every circumstance of ignominy ; and that afterwards a divine vindication was to take place.

This conception of the bearing, in humiliation, of the sins of others, is unique in the Old Testament ; it does not appear in the other songs and certainly not elsewhere in 2-Isaiah. Naturally it was fixed upon by Christian thought from the earliest times as prophetic of Christ. The picture, however, is certainly not that of Jesus of Nazareth, even if we concentrate on the passion ; nothing in Jesus ever excited that personal loathing of which the fourth song makes so much ; there is more that might suggest actual details of the passion narrative in Ps. xxii.

Whom had the prophet himself in mind ? Sellin has suggested Zerubbabel or Jehoiachin, or, lastly, Moses, whom he supposes to have been martyred, and his martyrdom to be here commemorated. Bertholet suggests Eleazar (2 Macc. vi. 18) ; Mowinkel, with whom Gunkel agrees, regards the Servant as the prophet himself, and the songs as autobiographical. Others, recognizing the enormous difficulties in the way of this (did the prophet expect his own death ?) and the other hypotheses, but noticing the individual touches, have suspected (not unnaturally) a reminiscence or idealization of the career of Jeremiah, who was certainly a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, and who was despised and rejected by his countrymen. Duhm finds in him a nameless teacher of the law or torah, who was to do what no Messiah had been able to accomplish, even at the cost of his life. The Jewish interpreters as a whole, followed by Origen in antiquity, and Marti and Cornill in modern times, have seen in the Servant the whole Jewish people who in their sufferings became the real servants and saviours of the world ; Budde, Driver, and G. A. Smith prefer to think of an idealized Israel rather than the actual mass of the people, one who is spoken of as an individual, like the idealized community in the Psalms ; Whitehouse would fix on a nucleus of the nation, a perplexity to their compatriots as much as to the surrounding peoples.

But there is something unsatisfactory about the whole discussion. As well ask who was the original of the Monna Lisa, and then rule out the answer because no woman could have possessed her elusive smile. Jeremiah, or some less known figure (such as Uriah, Jer. xxvi. 20 ff.), may have given the author the first suggestion for his portrait ; all the unmerited suffering

of the time (Jer. xxxi. 29, Ezek. xviii. 2) would intensify the conception; and in the new features which reveal themselves in each consecutive study we can see the poet-thinker concentrating on his mighty subject, and carried out of himself in so doing till he has left all possible experience behind, and has produced the classic picture of representative or vicarious suffering and death. It is more than a prediction; nowhere even in the New Testament have we so full and clear a statement of the bearing of the sins of the world: indeed, so frequent are the references to this fourth song that we are tempted to think that, but for its existence, the redemptive character of Christ's death would have been far less clearly recognized. But if not a prediction, the fourth, like the other songs, is in the fullest sense a prophecy. It penetrates to the heart of the mystery of redeeming love; it states the principle which, for the Christian, is at the very centre of God's dealing with the world of sin; and if it enabled the early Christian community to understand the meaning of the death of Christ, it cannot itself be understood apart from that supreme revelation of divine grace. In such prophecy can be seen the real nature of both revelation and inspiration.¹

Who is the author of the songs? The foregoing discussion will have made clear the difference from the position of 2-Isaiah. But is this difference decisive? Driver, G. A. Smith, Marti, Cornill, and others, in view of the marked similarities of style throughout the sixteen chapters, have held that it is not; quite recently Rudolph has argued that the prophet, after writing the bulk of the sixteen chapters, advanced to a further conception of Jahveh's redeeming purpose (cf. xlii. 9: 'the former things have come to pass; new things do I declare unto you'). Others, especially those who hold that the poet had an individual in mind, prefer to think of a distinct authorship; and Whitehouse (following Smend) urges that the author of the songs came first, in the deepest misery of the exile, and seeing no hope save in this mysterious redeeming figure; while the author of the rest of the sixteen chapters, fired by his courage, lived when the clouds were beginning to part as the advent of Cyrus drew nearer, and thus, simplifying the message, robbed it of its abiding and profound

¹ It should be noted that in the Targum, the Jewish interpretation of the prophets which took its final form in the fifth century A.D., the interpreters of the fourth song have not kept to the usual Jewish 'collective' or national interpretation; the Servant is here regarded as an individual, but his sufferings are made to light elsewhere: i.e. on the Jews, who are to be delivered at his intercession, or on the wicked, who are to be cast into Gehenna. Does this hint at the cogency and vigour of the Christian interpretation?

significance. It is indisputable, first, that the whole conception of redemption is one thing in the songs and another in the rest of the sixteen chapters, and second, that the author of the songs gains new light as he advances in his work. But the question whether he was identical with 2-Isaiah, or a friend, or a pupil, or a predecessor, is relatively unimportant; it is only necessary to notice the distinction of the two standpoints, and to observe the psychological difficulty of passing from one to the other in a comparatively short interval of time. It is even possible that the fourth song is from a different hand; but here the individuality of the treatment rests on elaboration rather than distinction of thought; and the much more artistic construction of the poem only corresponds to the greater breadth of poetic treatment. In any case, the four songs would appear to have been inserted in the rest of 'Isaiah' by one who had no suspicion of the difference of authorship, or no interest in the question. But it is not difficult to see superficial resemblances which determined his choice of the place in which each song was to be fitted in; on the one hand, the linkages or connecting verses (xlii. 5-9, xlix. 7-9a, l. 10, 11; there are none after liii. 12) if carefully studied may suggest that the author of the sixteen chapters himself took over the songs, and worked them into his own glowing prophecy. This question, however, is too delicate to be decided here; but there is much to support Whitehouse's view that not only is the view of redemption in these four songs quite different from that in the rest of 2-Isaiah, but that it suits the period of 2-Isaiah (the years just before Cyrus' conquest of Babylon) far less satisfactorily than a period considerably earlier in the exile.

NOTES ON THE 'SERVANT SONGS'

ISAIAH, CHAPTER XLII. 1-4. Jahveh here describes the Servant's commission, that is, the Servant's conception of Jahveh's purpose for him. The verses can perhaps be best understood if we regard the poet as here describing, dramatically, the Servant's call, an experience which can then be compared with those of Isaiah (vi), Jeremiah (i), Ezekiel (i), Amos (vii. 15, and perhaps vii. 1-9, viii. 1-3), and Paul (Acts ix. 1-9, xxii. 6-11, xxvi. 12-18). The youth feels himself to be selected, and filled with the divine spirit or breath (like Ezekiel; cf. also Micah iii. 8, Is. xi. 2). His mission is, however,

quite distinctly to the Gentiles (cf. Jer. i. 10). Israel as such is not mentioned. But, unlike the other prophets, he is not to speak in the open; he has a *law* or 'torah' of his own which is to bring peace and good government to the farthest nations. His success, if delayed, is certain; his function is like that of Israel as described in 2-Is., but the method is new.

1. *chosen*, a favourite word in 2-Is. for Israel, c. xli. 8, &c. *spirit*, cf. lxi. 1; the concept of the Spirit is a frequent one in Ezekiel, though it does not appear in Jeremiah. Cf. also Jud. vi. 34, xiii. 25, 1 Sam. xi. 6. *judgement* means, generally, either the sentence of a judge in a court, or the execution of a sentence, or the general obedience to established morality that would win a verdict in a court. The Servant is to be a great international teacher and inspirer of morality.

2. His methods are thus to be sharply distinguished from those of the older prophets, e. g. Amos.

3. *bruised*: cracked and therefore easily snapped. *smoking* or smouldering and almost extinguished. *in truth* means 'with reliability or fidelity'.

4. Here there is a play on words; *fail* is the word previously used for 'smoulder'; *be discouraged*, for 'bruised'. 2-Is. is fond of such 'puns', and also of the word *isles*, which denotes first, apparently, coasts, then foreign lands, especially as seen across the Mediterranean Sea. The repetition of the word *judgement* is significant.

Law, to the Hebrew, always suggests the teacher as much as the legislator; it means instruction, either in ritual or judicial decisions or matters of practical conduct or religion. The prophet and (in exilic and post-exilic times) the scribe have their torah as much as the priest. Verses 5-9 are an amplification of the above, in the spirit of 2-Isaiah; *covenant* (6), *prisoners* (7), are characteristic of that writer, as also the expressions (*glory, former things, &c.*) in vv. 8-9.

CHAPTER XLIX. 1-6. Some time has passed since the Servant was first called. He now announces his commission to the nations of the earth. He speaks of his selection, and like Jeremiah (i. 5) makes it pre-natal. Jahveh, he says, has treated him like a specially selected weapon, to be kept for the moment of greatest need, that is, he has been trained and (v. 3) authenticated. But he has had his moments of failure, when he seemed to have accomplished nothing. Even then, however, he was sure that Jahveh would vindicate him,

give him his sentence and his reward. And in this he felt justified, for a fresh conviction had come to him; not only did he know himself to be called to restore his own people, and as such to be sure of Jahveh's support, but he was also told, as he had been told originally (though perhaps not laying it to heart), that his mission was to be world-wide. (It is interesting to note that in the three accounts of Paul's conversion, the Gentiles are mentioned only in the third.)

2. *hid, kept close*, suggest some period of retirement, like Paul's in Arabia, or the Saviour's in the wilderness; the weapon, however, is of special excellence.

3. *Israel*; the occurrence of the word here is very difficult, especially in view of v. 6. There is no external evidence for omitting it (metrical or textual); on the other hand, there is no true parallelism here; 'Israel' is the parallel to 'Jacob', not to 'thou' or 'servant'. It looks like a reminiscence of xliv. 23, and without it, the words 'Thou art my Servant' gain greatly in emphasis. In these songs, the Servant is never explicitly identified with the actual Israel.

4. *judgement*, cf. xlii. 1; the sentence in my favour.

5, 6. The Servant thinks once more of his call; but he interprets it in the narrower sense, and has the wider sense brought to his mind. The Hebrew text here is not quite certain; but the general meaning is not in dispute. The restoration of the Gentiles had no place in the thought of 2-Is. The earlier prophets emphasized Jahveh's sovereignty over them. Ezekiel foretells a period when they will all be removed, so that Israel may dwell in safety (xxxii, xxxviii f.); the well-known oracle in Is. ii. 2-4 (= Mic. iv. 1-4) foretells a pilgrimage of the nations to Jerusalem to learn the law of Jahveh there; and Malachi speaks of Jahveh's name as honoured among the Gentiles; Jonah is sent as a missionary to Nineveh; but the thought of an individual who is to turn all nations to God is unique in the O. T.

7-9 serve as the connecting link with what follows; they are in a different metre, and employ familiar phrases (note how v. 7 suggests thoughts which meet us in Is. liii) but their conceptions are in the sphere of 2-Is. rather than of the four songs.

CHAPTER L. 4-9. Another interval has elapsed; one is reminded of the intervals that elapse between the different sections of Browning's *Paracelsus*; and the Servant now sees more clearly into the nature of his task. He is chastened and subdued. If he is to teach others, he has himself to be a pupil. Instead of being like a selected weapon,

he is to sustain the weak; and each morning he has to learn from Jahveh the actual words that are needed for the day's message. But his view has contracted. He is no longer thinking of foreign nations, but of the audiences who gather to listen to him each day (as with Ezekiel, ch. viii. 1 &c.); and they do not hear him with any favour; if he speaks of a mission to the Gentiles in their hearing, they perhaps relish it as little as did the Jews who listened to Paul. He is subject to ill-treatment and personal indignity. But he no longer complains; he submits to everything. He is sure of God's help and support; and in his stern resolve to be true to his message he is lifted above all suffering from indignity. And as he thinks of this divine support, he sees his adversaries, like opponents in a law-case, defeated and overwhelmed. It is the mood of Jeremiah, now humiliated by his foes, now sternly proclaiming their destruction.

4. *they that are taught*, i. e. disciples, like the Twelve, learning their lesson from their Master, and going into the country to deliver it (note the repetition of *taught*). The text in the latter half of the verse is doubtful, but the R.V. (with marg.) gives the sense.

6. For this tearing at the beard, cf. Neh. xiii. 25. The Servant is here in danger of being lynched rather than subjected to some official penalty.

7. Cf. Ezekiel iii. 8. The sudden transition to defiance in v. 8 is echoed in Rom. viii. 33 f. *justifieth*: puts in the right, delivers sentence in my favour; not, makes me righteous, but pronounces me to be without a stain on my character. Verses 10, 11 form the linkage; v. 10 might be spoken by the Servant, though in another mood; v. 11 is put into the mouth of Jahveh.

CHAPTERS LII. 13—LIII. 12. The end of the Servant's career is now described in an elaborate poem of five stanzas, each made up of three verses. The climax of the tragedy is represented dramatically; at least two stanzas are put into the mouth of (apparently non-Jewish) onlookers, as if the whole world, to whom the Servant had been sent, were gathered to witness his death. For the arrangement which gives us the comments first of one, then of another, we might compare Browning's poem, *The Ring and the Book*. Unfortunately, the text is in considerable confusion; we can only indicate here some of the more probable, or less uncertain, corrections. Unless these verses are regarded as a separate poem, we must suppose that another interval has passed, during which a far severer

fate has befallen the victim, and he has suffered what was in appearance a judicial murder, but in reality the plan of Jahveh by which to accomplish his design of restoring the sinners. The distinction between Israel and the Gentiles is no longer emphasized; there are, indeed, references in the beginning (lii. 14) to nations and kings, but the author is thinking of sin (as something common to all men) rather than of race, as in xlix. 6. And this strengthens the conclusion that Israel is not here thought of as suffering for the Gentiles, and that the conception is quite different from that of 2-Is.

a. lii. 13-15. The speaker is Jahveh, who, contemplating the deep degradation of the Servant, emphasizes the contrast between what he seems to be and what he turns out to be, a contrast which will astonish the world.

13. *deal wisely*; 'prosper' (R.V. marg.) is better.

14. *like* should probably be 'for', and the second person (*thee*) is almost certainly a mistake for the third ('him'). *more than any man*, 'more than the sons of men', i. e. 'out of all semblance to humanity', some disfiguring disease more terrible than that of Job.

15. For *sprinkle* the word should be translated 'startle'. The event is too strange for a tale; now it is before their eyes. *understand*, i. e. 'perceive'.

b. liii. 1-3. This stanza is uttered by a 'chorus' of onlookers, the nations themselves, though we should probably do wrong to regard the Jews as necessarily excluded. Evidently, since the episode of the third poem, the Servant's activity has reached a new field; his sufferings are much more than the result of a popular disturbance; they are, so to speak, an event of world-wide notoriety. The nations describe what they had thought of him. Who could believe, they ask, what we have to say of him? he was such an unsightly and miserable object that we could not but loathe him.

1. The second question may be a parallel to the first (*revealed* in its real significance), or, 'and who was he to whom the saving might of Jahveh was thus made clear?'

2. *tender plant*, &c., a weak sucker or shoot, sprouting up from the root out of a parched ground, stunted and ugly. *and when we see him*: better, 'that we should behold it, nor beauty . . .'

3. *acquainted with grief*, 'an intimate acquaintance of sickness'. It is some bodily deformity which is in view here all the while.

c. liii. 4-6. The onlookers are still the speakers. They now describe the discovery they made. It has been suggested that a Hebrew composition, like a play of Shakespeare, often falls into five parts, of which the centre is like the keystone of an arch. The third stanza here conveys the central thought; the first two are preliminary, the last two work out the results. But the whole poem turns on the middle verse of the middle stanza; all these sufferings, they now see, were borne for them, and accomplish their own healing. While they were living their careless lives, their sin was being taken and placed on his shoulders. The Hebrew word for *bear* (v. 4, 'borne') demands attention here. In the Levitical legislation, to 'bear sin' has a technical meaning; to bear the responsibility of it and to endure whatever stigma or disgrace or penalty or suffering ensues as a consequence. This must result when no sacrifice will avail. The scapegoat (Lev. xvi) bears, and bears away, the sin of the community, releases the community (along with the sacrifice of the other goat) from the burden of the year's misdeeds. Here the term is applied to sicknesses (for *griefs*, R.V. marg.) and sufferings. Probably leprosy is meant, for the word *stricken* should be plague-stricken, as of one plunged in humiliation by divine power. Such suffering, as Job's friends believed, was the result of sin (cf. John ix. 2); but this sin was theirs, not his; and it was a chastisement which brought about their peace; his pain was their cure. Thus Jahveh had *laid* ('piled' might express the rather brutal association of the word) not only the pain but the actual sin of them all upon him. In this stanza the chief emphasis is laid on the personal pronouns, 'our', 'he', 'we', 'on him'.

4. *carried*: render 'loaded himself with'.

d. liii. 7-9. Here the speaker, perhaps the poet in his own person, describes the actual martyrdom of the Servant.

7. The parallelism shows that there is no thought of a sacrifice here; the comparison suggests simply the uncomplaining meekness of the victim.

8. *my people* is difficult; 'peoples' would be easier (a very slight alteration, 'his people', has been suggested; but he is suffering for more than Israel).

9. For *rich* a slight change would give 'evil-doers'.

e. liii. 10-12. The same speaker continues for one verse, and then Jahveh himself breaks in, with the final pronouncement on the Servant. The Hebrew text is still, however, very doubtful; v. 10 should probably

begin 'Yet Jahveh was pleased to cleanse him from disease'. The word translated *offering for sin* is used of the compensation sent by the Philistines (1 Sam. vi. 3 ff.) and for the priests (2 Kings xii. 17); in the priestly law it is used of offerings for offences that could be estimated and so covered by compensation. The word appears to be used here in the general sense of 'compensation' rather than in a ritual sense; there is no reference in the whole passage to the sacrifice on the altar. A resurrection and a future life of happiness are clearly implied by what follows. The gifts which compensate the sufferer for his woes remind us of the end of Job; but the self-dedication of the Servant is emphasized throughout.

II. *justify* † better, 'bring righteousness to'. The poet does not define the manner in which this is done, any more than he suggests a doctrine of the future life. He is not a theologian. But he makes it clear that the Servant knows the secret of removing from others their sin, so that in the sight of God they are righteous. And is not this at the heart of the Atonement, the Reconciliation, of Christ?

ISAIAH XL—LV

EVEN the most casual reader will observe the break that meets him, when reading the canonical book of Isaiah, at the end of ch. xxxix. Only a portion of those chapters can be safely regarded as the work of Isaiah of Jerusalem (see, for example, pp. 132 ff.) ; the first half of the book of Isaiah is really a prophetic anthology, with a historical appendix, containing passages separated in date by at least four centuries. Chh. xl—lv are distinct from every section of that anthology, as well as from all other existing prophecy. They contain certain well-marked conceptions which appear in every part of the section, but nowhere else with anything like the same fullness or explicitness. In the first place, Israel is in a condition in which it needs no reminder of its sin ; there is no denunciation, punishment has already done its work ; secondly, Israel's one duty is to believe the prophet's message of hope, and to commend that message the prophet employs a rhetoric as lofty as it is appealing. Thirdly, the object of that hope is a deliverance which is neither from rival nations nor from internal injustice and oppression, nor again is it eschatological ; it is a return across the desert to the old home in Palestine. This is indeed sometimes described in terms so glowing that they might well be called eschatological ; but it is to take place in the near future, and it will be the result of events already coming to the birth. Fourthly, that deliverance will vindicate, so to speak, the character of God, it will reveal Jahveh's 'righteousness', indeed, the prophet is much more interested in the righteousness of Jahveh than in that of Israel. Fifthly, Israel is Jahveh's servant, chosen to impose his, or its, yoke upon the nations of the earth ; and lastly, the instrument of this deliverance is a political power which is hinted at in rather transparent terms, and is once identified (though the passage has been disputed : see p. 124) with Cyrus.

The whole gives an impression of homogeneity to which the nearest parallel is the book of Ezekiel (the two passages which seem to conflict with the general tone of encouragement and divine favour, xlii. 24 b and xlviii. 18 f, are almost certainly additions, see p. 121) ; but Ezekiel passes rapidly from one

set of ideas to another, and the text of his last nine chapters has been worked over (see p. 67). In these sixteen chapters we cannot indeed point to a continuous development of thought, but the same conceptions recur in a sort of circular or spiral movement which reminds us of the Fourth Gospel. One modification, however, must be made to this statement. The sequence of thought is broken by the four 'Servant Songs' (xliii. 1-9, xlix. 1-9, l. 4-9, lii. 13-14), which have just been considered (see pp. 102 ff.); when they are removed the unity of feeling and appeal is clear.

It is one of the most certain results of what is known as 'criticism' that these chapters date from the later years of the exile. There is only one period in the history of Israel which answers to the scene of this prophecy, and that is the years from 550 to 539, when Cyrus of Media was advancing to the conquest of the now rapidly decaying empire of Babylon. To attribute them to Isaiah of Jerusalem, or indeed to any other of the authors whose works are included in the 'Book of Isaiah' would be to reduce the whole prophecy to futility. The prophets always spoke to their contemporaries, and on contemporary issues. If their inspiration makes them available for others, on whom the ends of the world are come, their own eyes are always fixed on the world around them.

The long and splendid reign of Nebuchadnezzar ended in 562; he was succeeded by his son Amil-Marduk (Evil-Mero-dach) who, we read, elevated Jehoiachin from prison to something of royal dignity. After two other brief reigns Nabonidus (Nabu-nahid) came to the throne. His interest was chiefly in religion, its polity, as we should call it, and its temples. He undertook extensive restorations; but at the same time, as if animated by a centralizing policy like that of Josiah nearly a century before, he concentrated religious worship in the capital, to the disgust of large numbers of his subjects. Meanwhile, a new power was threatening the empire. The Medes had been the ancient allies of Babylon in pulling down the power of Assyria; but Cyrus, the chief of a small but warlike tribe calling itself Anshan or Persia, in a rapid and brilliant career, conquered the Medes, as well as the Lydians of Asia Minor, and advanced against Babylon itself. In 539 he entered Babylon, gained possession of Nabonidus, and, to the delight of the Babylonians, restored the ancient cult-places and worships, and set himself to conciliate the various elements in his new realm. Our sixteen chapters contain no detailed predictions; prophecy does not for the most part spend time over details; but the

chapters reflect very clearly the progress of Cyrus and the consternation which it caused (e. g. xlvi. 1 f.).¹

There is a further contrast between the prophet and his predecessors. Both Jeremiah and Ezekiel trusted Babylon. We read how Jeremiah, in a well-known letter, bade the exiles settle down in Babylon for at least two generations ('seventy years', xxix. 10). Ezekiel, though never breathing a word against the government, set his thoughts on the return to Palestine; living when he did, it was impossible for him to nourish 2nd Isaiah's political expectations, but his view of the spiritual process also was different. Restoration, in his mind, was to be the prelude to a change of heart (xxxvi. 31); to 2nd Isaiah no change of heart is needed, the exiles have but to be ready to leave their prison house. Ezekiel loves to dwell on the life in Palestine after the return, and the new order of worship to be instituted. 2nd Isaiah, who has no interest in cultus or sacrifice, does not linger over the future; his eager imagination is concentrated on the actual journey home. He hardly looks, indeed, beyond the early stages of the journey.

And with this concentration of vision goes, what would have been strange to both Jeremiah and Ezekiel, a deep hatred of Babylon. Perhaps, had they known Babylon as he knew it, they would have shared his emotions. It must in any case be remembered that the empire was steadily weakening, and there are hints, in the inscriptions of both Nebuchadnezzar and Nabonidus, that they did not confine their restoring activities to the purest parts of the cults of their religion. But 2nd Isaiah's resolute and scornful opposition was founded on something more positive, a passionate belief in Jahveh as the one creative power of the Universe. It cannot be maintained that Isaiah was the first Hebrew monotheist, but there is a new note when he speaks of Jahveh's relation to the world, a relation at once universalistic and particularist; for in Jahveh's eyes the proudest nations of the earth were as dust, just as the most widely venerated idols were obscene mockeries. It is noteworthy that this new conviction of the supreme grandeur of Jahveh came to the Jews at the moment when they might have been forgiven for thinking, as many of them were tempted to think, that he had been hopelessly discredited. It is one of the paradoxes in the history of religion that the God who, in Palestine, where His own people were independent and powerful,

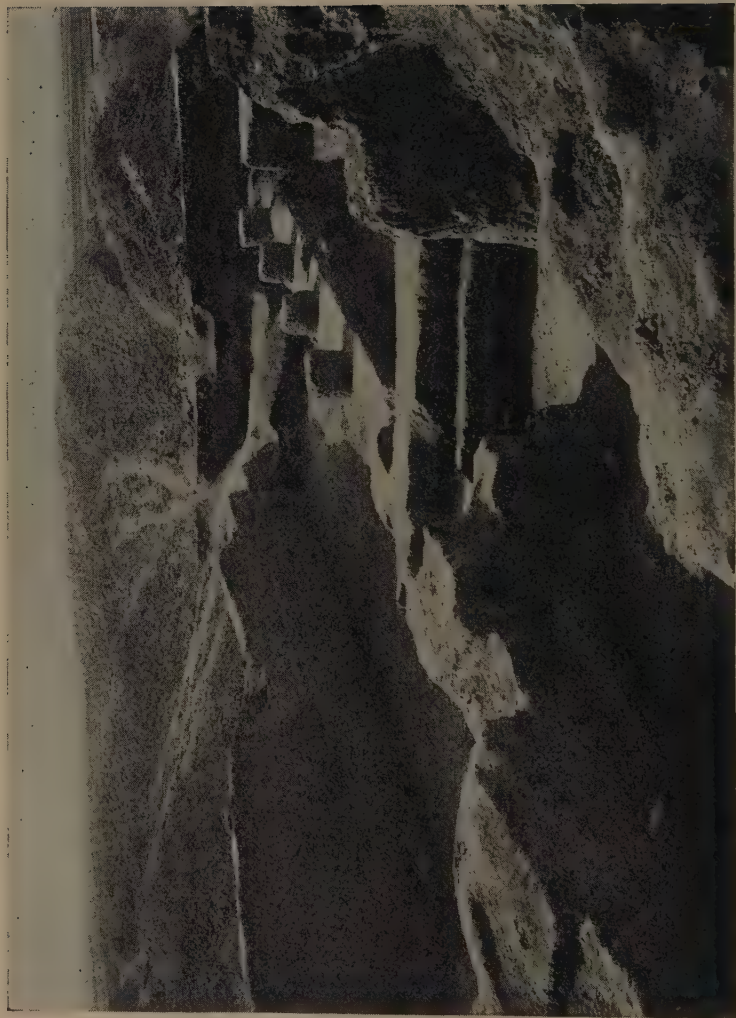
¹ The character of Cyrus suggested in Herodotus' account of his leadership of the Persians in their revolt from the Medes (i. 126-9) aptly illustrates what the author of these poems appears to have thought of him.

was only one among the gods of the nations, became in Babylon, where His own people were a band of helpless slaves, the One, the Almighty, and the Eternal.¹

A word should here be said about 2nd Isaiah's style. It is as characteristic as his thought. Four points may specially be mentioned, the doubling of words (xl. 1, xli, 27, li. 9, 12, 17), apposition (xli. 8, 17, xlii. 1, also xl. 22, 28, and xlii. 5), the fondness for particular phrases (as may be seen in e.g. xli. 10, xlii. 1, 5, xlv. 2, liv. 4, also in xlv. 5, 6, 18, and xlvi. 9), and lastly, the use of special words not frequent in Hebrew literature elsewhere; the word 'isles' will most readily occur to the English reader, but there are others equally noticeable in the Hebrew. No one of these would be decisive by itself; but taken together they leave an impression on the mind which makes it almost impossible to mistake a section out of 2-Is. for the work of any other author. To this we may add the special fullness and richness of his descriptions of Jahveh's glory, as against the futility of the idols. Amos comes nearest to him in this respect, but the difference is clear if we compare Amos iv. 13, v. 8, 9, ix. 6, with Is. xl. 26, xliii. 15, 16, xlv. 24, xlviii. 13.

But were these chapters written in Babylon? It has been argued (e.g. by Duhm) that there is nothing distinctively Babylonian in the implied surroundings, and that the prophet has a continuously 'Palestinian' outlook, from the address to the 'cities of Judah' in xl. 2 onwards. These facts, such as they are, would also affect Duhm's own view, that the chapters were composed in Phœnicia, but it must be remembered that even after 586 Palestine was not absolutely denuded of Jews, and that in all probability, in the time of Zerubbabel, the returned exiles formed only a minority of the community in Palestine. That these chapters, therefore, should have been composed by an eager Jew living still in the neighbourhood of the ruined Jerusalem, and looking for the return of his countrymen from the far-off Babylon, is not impossible. On the other hand, the references to the Babylonian background are numerous, though not entirely on the surface, e.g. xli. 18, xliii. 23, 24, xlv. 4, xlvi. 1, xlvii. 9, 12, li. 9, 10. With our present knowledge of Babylonian life we can see from these and other passages how the writer lives in a world of irrigation, large trees, majestic temples, populous cities, where religion, though proud and ornate, is contaminated by magic. All this would hardly have

¹ Is. xl-lv are often referred to collectively as '2-Isaiah' or 'Deutero-Isaiah', and Is. lvi-lxvi as '3-Isaiah' or 'Trito-Isaiah'. In the following pages we use 2-Isaiah for chh. xl-lv *without* the four 'Servant Songs'.



OUTER COURT OF OLD SUMERIAN TEMPLE AT KISH, LOWER MESOPOTAMIA

Before 3000. Pillars are rare in Babylonian architecture.



AIR PHOTOGRAPH OF UR

showing the Ziggurat or temple mound in the centre, and portions of other temples in the foreground

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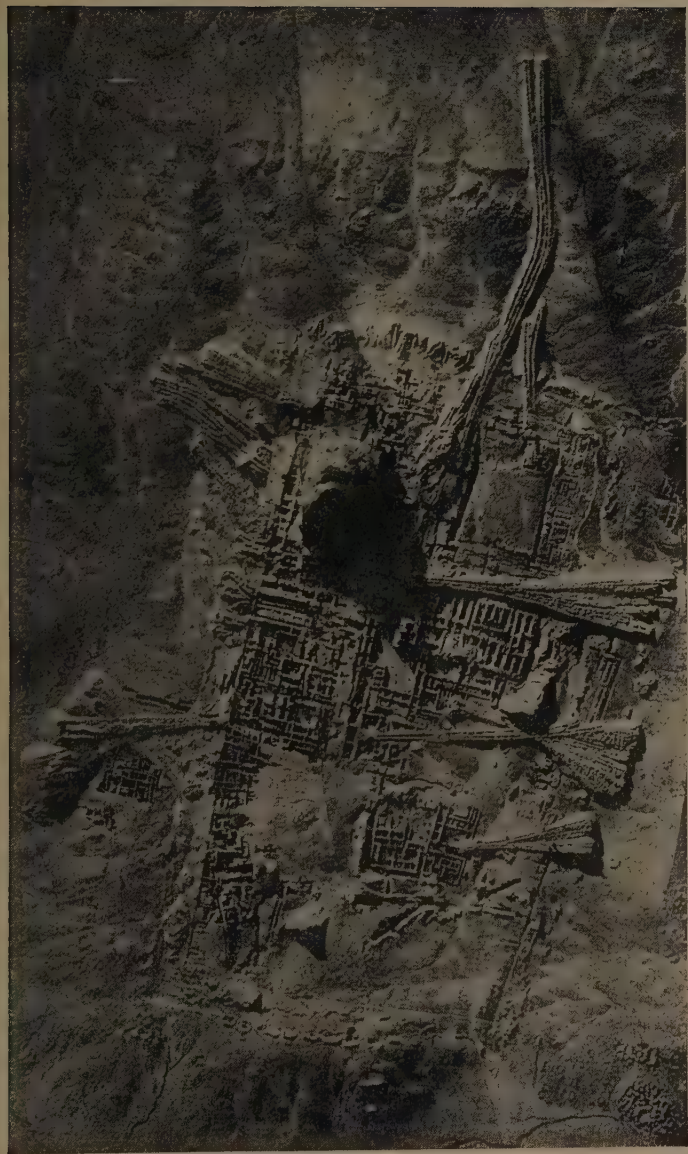
been possible had he been writing and living in Palestine, but, if he lived in Babylon, it is perfectly natural that he should have felt his soul's home to be in the land of his fathers. This was all the more natural because there were Jews not only in Palestine, but in Egypt, all of whom had but one point in common, the love for their old home. The writer's mind, too, is that of the exile; he never mentions places or scenes in Palestine, except Jerusalem itself,¹ and, as we have seen, his outlook does not extend beyond the actual moment of return; he never pictures the exiles settling down in the old country. We must conclude that internal evidence is all on the side of the composition of xl-lv between 550 and 540 B. C., and in Babylon.

NOTES ON ISAIAH XL-LV

CHAPTER XL. I-II. *The Prologue.* There is no introduction (as in Is. i. 1, Jer. i. 1, Ezek. i. 1, &c.) containing the name and ancestry of the prophet; instead, in one or two arresting chords, as it were, is the keynote of the whole melody. A company of prophets is addressed, and bidden to speak *upon the heart*, i. e. the inmost thoughts (v. 2) of the forlorn city. Her long arduous toil (not *warfare*) is over, her iniquity is fully paid for; she has suffered, indeed, far more than she deserved (a thought impossible for a prophet *before* the exile).

Then are heard two voices. 'Hark, a cry, Prepare . . .!' Some exalted or angelic being (not God, because of v. 3 end) commands that a road should be built across the desert, that the exiles may return to their own country. The prophet sees the road stretching (almost like a modern railway-line) flat and smooth (*plain*, v. 4) and direct over hills and wadis. V. 5, to judge from the metre, appears to be an addition; the building of the road is to be accompanied by a theophany (*glory*); and the angelic word is attributed to Jahveh himself. Then comes a second voice (v. 6). 'Hark a voice, Proclaim'. This second voice is very different from the first; and its melancholy tones break the joyous sequence of vv. 9 ff. following on vv. 3, 4. The metre too is different. But this does not, in spite of Duham and others, necessarily denote a different author. The vision of the crowd returning across the new desert road suggests, not altogether un-

¹ It is perhaps not wholly fanciful to contrast 2nd Isaiah's references to Palestine, such as they are, with those of Ezekiel (who had lived there) in Ezek. xxxiv, xxxvi.



ANOTHER VIEW OF THE TEMPLE ENCLOSURE AND ZIGGURAT

at Ur, with other temples. Note the spots still unexcavated, and the arrangements for carrying away the rubbish

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naturally, the weakness and transitoriness of human life; but the divine promise (v. 8), now to be fulfilled, remains. The contrast is often in our author's mind; and it produces a fresh and triumphant confidence. He now calls upon a body of messengers to tell Jerusalem and her *daughters* (the other Judæan townships), waiting for the exiles from the East, that their salvation is on its way.

9. *thou that tellest*: a *feminine* singular, suggesting, by a familiar Hebrew idiom, a collective plural. These messengers are to take their stand on the hills of Judæa itself. The prophet, it seems, is not in Palestine; but Judæa is not wholly waste; its inhabitants are ready to welcome their brethren from abroad. But more than their brethren; it is Jahveh, the triumphant warrior who brings with him (a curious and bold metaphor) the *reward* or 'pay' for his exertions—the power to deliver the forlorn remnant in his own land (v. 10); yet more than a warrior, a shepherd, who pastures his flock with the tenderest care (an image already familiar from Ezek. xxxiv).

CHAPTER XLI. 1-7, 21-9. The rest of ch. xl is a magnificent paean on the unique power of Jahveh, exalted above all earthly rulers; now Jahveh turns to announce the ruler whom he has chosen as his instrument. *Be silent*; 'attention, ye coast lands' (v. 1). The heathen, as if still obdurate, are bidden to collect their strength and try their case with Jahveh. Jahveh then points to Cyrus, his tool (unnamed here, but cf. ch. xlv. 1) whose conquests had begun *in the east* (over Media) in 553. *Righteousness* (v. 2) is a characteristic word of our author, in the sense of Jahveh's fidelity to his own promises. Cyrus has been everywhere victorious (v. 3). Who, Jahveh asks (v. 4), has done this? *Calling the generations* . . . is really part of his answer. V. 5, if the text is correct, shows the 'coast lands' convinced and trembling at Jahveh's power. But vv. 6, 7 are certainly misplaced. They should follow ch. xl. 19, and are part of the description of the busy idol-makers, the costly gold and silver images of the rich, or the carved wooden figures (xl. 20) of the poor. Idolatry is always treated by our author with a contemptuous irony.

After a stirring address of encouragement to Jahveh's *servant* Israel (vv. 8-20), Jahveh again turns to the doubters. Here the prophet seems to have Babylon in mind. Babylon is described as entirely failing to foresee the coming ruin. Its monarch, Nabonidus (named after Nebo, the god of prophecy!), had certainly paid little attention to the coming invasion. The Babylonian gods could neither

interpret the past (v. 22) nor predict the future—they could arouse no respect (v. 23). Did the prophet, in this ironical outburst, think that they existed at all? Certainly not as gods to be feared; possibly as demons (cf. St. Paul; 1 Cor. x. 21). Again he appeals to the near advent of Cyrus. Cyrus was not a monotheistic Jahvist (as v. 25 might imply). He was friendly to the aspirations of the Jews (as is suggested for example by Ezra i. 2), but equally so to the religion of his new empire of Babylon. No one in Babylon can appeal to any prediction of this ('it is right', not *he is righteous*, v. 26). In the remaining verses the text is not clear; but the general meaning is 'I am the first to announce the news—the news of deliverance; none of their oracles can give a word of advice; their deeds (!) are as futile and hollow as their statues'.

CHAPTERS XLII. 18-25, XLIII. 1-7. Following on another prediction of deliverance, for the blind (xlii. 16), the prophet now calls to those who are both blind and deaf (v. 18). Who are these, he asks (v. 19)? The original question would seem to have been, 'Who is blind, as the nation (*my servant*), and deaf as the man devoted to Jahveh?' But the text has been expanded, possibly through the influence of xlii. 1 ff. The exiles were indeed unaware of what was happening around them (like the Babylonians, see on xli. 22). It is rare for this prophet (unlike his predecessors) to find any fault with his own people. The *law* which Jahveh had designed to exalt (v. 21) is the general instruction given by his priests and prophets, not an actual code. Instead, the people continues as the helpless prey of its captors, in its blind misunderstanding of events. Who in fact pays (present tense) any attention? Who was the real cause of this calamity? (v. 23). The second part of the verse introduces matter which is strange to the prophet's thought. Dullness, but not disobedience, is his complaint. It is better to omit the words, and to read v. 25 as carrying on the question ('and—not *therefore*—poured upon him his wrath . . .?').

The question is answered effectively though indirectly in xliii. 1. Jahveh has *made* (general term, as in Gen. i) and *fashioned*, like a potter (as in Gen. ii) his people. He has vindicated his right over Israel and given him a name, like a father (v. 1). No forces can therefore overwhelm the favoured company.

2. *burned*, i. e. branded or marked by fire.

3. The rich lands of the south are Israel's ransom price. For *Seba*, on the coast of the Red Sea (?), LXX reads apparently Syene; perhaps

a reference to the Jewish military colony there (i. e. at Aswan; see p. 211). The Persian conqueror of Babylon is to receive Egypt and the rest as the equivalent (a magnificently rich one) for his service in releasing the exiles. Egypt was captured by Cambyses, four years after Cyrus' death. But the price is not too high; for Jahveh has *loved* Israel (as Hosea was the first to teach). Hence (v. 5) the exiles will be gathered from all the places of their dispersion, North and South, East and West (cf. xlix. 12). The fall of Jerusalem had meant a much wider scattering of fugitives than is generally supposed, even if the phrase, *the ends of the earth*, is hyperbolic. And as the actual men and women (note this approach to individualism) have been created to bring glory to Jahveh, he may well deliver them thus.

CHAPTER XLIV. 6-23. This passage contains another of the biting satires on idolatry which are characteristic of these chapters (vv. 9-20). It has been questioned, however, whether verses 9-20 are in their right place, or even by the prophet. It is true that they seem to break the connexion between vv. 8 and 21; and metre and rhythm are almost if not quite absent. They have also been felt to exhibit a superfluous wealth of detail very different from the surging and rapid emotion of our prophet. The text, too, presents special difficulties. But even if the prophet originally passed straight from v. 8 to v. 21, there is a psychological fitness in the insertion of this satire; for to ask such a question as that of v. 8 might well call forth a damaging or despairing retort from Jewish listeners who compared the impressiveness and confidence of Babylonian idol-worship with the apparent helplessness of Jahveh.

In vv. 6-8 the prophet gathers up the motifs of the preceding; Jahveh, Israel's champion, is the unique power; the predictor from ancient times (for *the ancient people*, v. 7, we should probably read something like 'the future from of old'). Hence, there can be no ground for fear. This is followed, in v. 21, by a new appeal; in the last clause, as in R.V. marg., active instead of passive is probably right. The claim to be remembered is further urged by the announcement of forgiveness (v. 22). Here the order familiar in earlier prophecy is reversed, and forgiveness comes first, and return or repentance is to come afterwards. Is this correct psychologically? Ezekiel favours it in foretelling Israel's self-loathing *after* restoration to Palestine and prosperity there. It is characteristic of 2-Is., who regards the nation's sin as something already atoned for, and flung aside, and



ANOTHER VIEW OF THE TEMPLE ENCLOSURE AND ZIGGURAT AT UR

Note the three flights of steps on its north-east (left-hand) face. The clearing, begun in 1918, has been mainly carried out in 1925-6

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therefore rightly unable to form a barrier between the nation and God.

In vv. 9-20 the writer collects every suggestion that could arouse ridicule for the august and pretentious images. The absurdity of all this carving of gods! (*witnesses* v. 9 should be 'servants'). The *fellows* (v. 11) are the members of the craft group or guild (xl. 19f.). They will blush at the thought of their wasted labour. The author then goes through the process of manufacture, from the end to the beginning. With exhausting labour the smith overlays the wooden core with metal (v. 12); previously, the carpenter roughly hews out a log, marks the outline of the figure upon it with ochre (R.V. marg., v. 13), and then carves it into human form. Before that he has had to choose the wood, and the tree had been previously planted, and watered by the rain on the hill-side (v. 14). The irony of the description which follows is irresistible; the same log of wood is used, partly for cooking the dinner, partly for making a god to worship. And yet (v. 18) they do not see it! V. 20 is a kind of gnomic comment on the section: 'he who feeds on ashes is seduced by a deceived heart, he cannot rescue his life or say, is there not a lie . . . ?' (*ashes*, like the bare dusty hill-side in the desert, instead of the lush grass of green pastures.)

CHAPTERS XLIV. 24-XLV. 8. This poem follows appropriately on xlv. 6-8, 21-3. But the crisis is drawing nearer, and Cyrus is now mentioned without disguise. Jahveh begins as before as the redeemer of Israel, the one god, the origin and fulfiller of ancient predictions, thus making nonsense of all the famous Babylonian craft of divination. With a fresh definiteness of hope he looks across to Jerusalem (unmentioned since ch. xl) now to be rebuilt, and then utters the name of Cyrus its rebuilder (v. 28). For *shepherd*, not in itself an unfitting title (though more often with an objective genitive), may be read 'My friend', denoting still closer intimacy.

Then with rising excitement his career is summed up, all under Jahveh's protection (xlv. 1). No other names are here mentioned, though the prophet must have known something of the Medes and the Lydians; kings are reduced to impotence before him (their *loins are loosed*); he enters cities, marches triumphantly across deserts, and seizes his enemies' fabulous wealth. All this is that he may recognize Jahveh, that Israel may be delivered, and that Jahveh may be known by the nations far and wide. For, unlike the Babylonian gods, who had to fight uncertainly with the powers of darkness, Jahveh is



A BABYLONIAN HERO-GOD

Possibly representing the combat of Marduk with Tiamat, or chaos

supreme for good and evil alike (v. 7). The passage ends with a figure of righteousness, divine fidelity to promise raining down from the sky, and being met by springs breaking out of the ground, as in the old tale of the Flood, where the windows of heaven were opened, and the fountains of the abyss broken up. It has been pointed out that the expressions in vv. 1-4 correspond with curious exactness to the tablet whereon Cyrus records his own victory here predicted. Was the prophet familiar with the court style? It is not quite impossible that Cyrus, who certainly took an interest in the Jews, may have known of these poems after his arrival in Babylon, and even that through his scribes he employed some of their language.

CHAPTER XLVI. 1-7. The prophet, now sure of the coming victory, turns to Babylon and sees its gods, as futile as their own idols, led into captivity. *Bel* was the patron god of Babylon itself, identical with Marduk or Merodach (cf. the names Belshazzar, Merodach-Baladan). *Nebo* is the scribe or herald of the gods. The images were wont to be solemnly carried about in great festal processions; many representations of this practice survive. Now, while the gods are brought down from their exaltation, the images are loaded on the backs of cattle—a new kind of transport. Instead of helping and saving their worshippers they are only good to weary brute beasts (v. 2), as they, like their servants, are enslaved. But with Israel and Jahveh how different! Jahveh will bear and carry and ‘load himself’ (the author uses all the previous words, but characteristically in a new sense) with his people (v. 4: *made* should more probably be ‘borne’). The bearing by a further play on words is here, too, used in a double sense; as a mother bears her unborn child, or as a rescuer carries a wounded man out of danger. Israel, who had perhaps compared Jahveh to those great gods of Babylon to his disadvantage, must now see how incomparably he stands above them (v. 5).

Here follows (vv. 7, 8) a reminiscence of the former ironical reference to the idol manufacturers (cf. xlv. 10 ff.), with yet another play on the idea of *bearing*; but here the picture is of the carrying of the idol just made to its place in the shrine; this hardly fits the context, and appears to be an insertion. V. 9 carries on the thought of v. 5. Again there is a reference to the fulfilment of ancient predictions, and to Cyrus, the swift bird of prey, the ‘man whom Jahveh’s design has fixed on’ (v. 11): all the events of history are in Jahveh’s hand to make clear his *righteousness*—his fidelity to his promises.

CHAPTER XLIX. 14-21. Ch. xlvii is a prolonged cry of triumph over Babylon, cast down to the dust for her cruelty and her superstition. Ch. xlviii. 1-12 introduces an entirely new note into the prophecies; Israel is to be delivered, but in spite of her obstinacy and self-conceit she has refused the clearest teaching, and has been disobedient from the beginning; Jahveh therefore shows his power, not for her sake, but his own. The tone of this passage is strikingly like that of Ezekiel (cf. ch. xxxvi. 22, &c.), or the later chapters (lvi-lxvi) of Isaiah. If the verses are by our author we must suppose that he is here contemplating certain evil traits in his people which he everywhere else refuses to consider; but it would seem more likely (so Duhm and Marti and Whitehouse) that a passage from some later writer is here inserted. Verses 12-22 (cf. lvii. 21) are more characteristic of 2nd Isaiah, except that vv. 18, 19, 22 fit the tone of the first half of the chapter. On xlix. 1-9 a, see p. 106. Ch. xlix. 9 b-13 contains a striking enlargement of the thought of xl. 4. This is followed by a passage of peculiar and pathetic beauty (vv. 14-21). The incredulity of the Hebrews waiting in Jerusalem (*Zion*, v. 14) is referred to as a plaintive lament. 'Why,' Jahveh answers, 'I could forget you even less than a young mother could forget her infant child; you, too, are a mother (a quick transference of the figure), and see, your children, in crowds, are returning to you, as your foes evacuate your territory in hot haste. A mother, and a bride too, in this new-born joy. Your children are so many that the land will actually be too small for its new inhabitants; and as you see them returning, you will ask in amazement, "Who are they? How could I, left desolate and wandering, as in exile, up and down in my own devastated land, have had all these born to me?"' The chapter ends with a further vision of the return; the exiles will be brought back in triumph by the great powers of the earth, and Jahveh will tear them in violence from their captors.¹

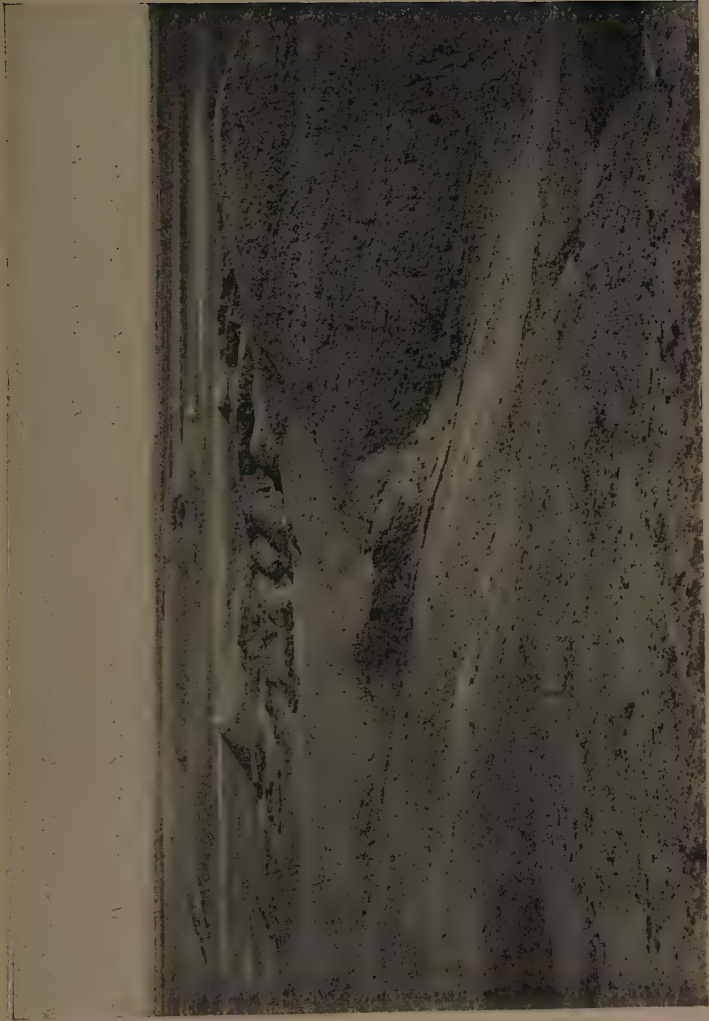
CHAPTERS LI. 17-LII. 12. A long poem (arranged by Duhm in five strophes of approximately equal length), addressed, like xlix. 14 ff., to Jerusalem. She lies, as it were, helpless and intoxicated by the bitter cup of misery given to her by Jahveh's anger (v. 17: *bowl* is a Babylonian word, strange to the later Hebrews, and therefore explained by the Hebrew word for *cup* which follows). This 'cup' metaphor first appears in Jer. xxv. 15 ff. Jahveh would fain comfort her; but her children are helpless, like a snared antelope (v. 20). In

¹ The references in this and following chh. to Jerusalem have led to the suggestion that the poet has now left Babylon for Judaea.



THE SO-CALLED 'TOMB OF EZRA' ON THE RIVER TIGRIS

This and the succeeding picture show the contrast between arid and tilled in Mesopotamia



THE DESERT
Site of ancient Kish

the second strophe (vv. 21-3) the cup is to be removed ; Jahveh, at once the counsel for the defence (v. 22) and the champion of the oppressed, will avenge Zion's cruel wrongs. (Note how quickly the author's thought passes from the recognition of these wrongs as punishments.) The cup is to be drunk by the oppressors themselves. The passage is full of instruction for the attitude of the exiles to their ancient home. From the third strophe (lii. 1-2) some lines appear to be lost. Zion is now bidden to arise. She is to be *holy*, i. e. (as in the view of post-exilic Judaism) the unclean presence of foreigners is no more to be allowed ; cf. Ezek. xliii. 7 and the subsequent struggles of Nehemiah and Ezra to banish the foreign element in the population of Jerusalem. For *sit thee down* (v. 2), 'thou captive' should probably be read.

Verses 3-6 are in prose and appear to be an interpolation, in which the past sorrows of the nation are regarded not as penalties for her sin, but as due to the malice of her foes ; Egypt (in the enslavement under the Pharaohs) and Assyria. *Here* (v. 5) would seem to mean 'in Babylon ; their tyrants have yelled in malicious triumph (if the text here is right) and jeered at Jahveh. In v. 6 omit the second *therefore* and the words supplied by R.V. (*they shall know*). In the fourth strophe (vv. 7-9) the messengers are hurrying westwards over the mountains to the city to announce the approach of the exiles. They are answered by the watchmen on the ruined walls ('hark, thy watchmen' ! cf. xl. 3), and the inhabitants then raise a shout of delight (*together*, v. 8). When Jahveh, at the head of the procession, returns to Zion, they gaze into the faces (*eye to eye*, v. 8) of the new-comers ; and the very ruins raise the same joyful shout (*sing together*, v. 9, repeated in our author's manner from v. 8). The fifth strophe turns back to Babylon. The deliverance is now accomplished ; Cyrus is regarded as having now broken the Babylonian power (v. 11). The exiles are therefore free to begin their march ; they will bring back the Temple-vessels with them (for the importance with which these were regarded, cf. Jer. xxviii. 6 and Ezra i. 9 ff.). But they must themselves be free from impurity (cf. ch. xxxv. 8) like the Jerusalemites ; they must take time to ensure all due precautions (v. 12), for their departure will be very different from the flight from Egypt, though Jahveh will be both before and behind them as at the crossing of the Red Sea.

CHAPTERS LIV, LV. Passing over lii. 13-liii. 12 (the last of the 'Servant Songs', see p. 108) we find the same note of eager expect-

tancy in ch. liv. It would appear that the armies of Cyrus are drawing nearer. The thought of the mother rejoicing in her new-found children is expanded into the thought of the city as the actual bride of Jahveh (liv. 5); and the author passes into a glowing picture of the splendour of the new régime. But the exiles are even yet not ready for their journey; hence the prophet makes a further appeal to them (lv. 1-5). They have settled down to a life of trading in Babylon, as Jeremiah indeed had advised them to do (ch. xxix. 4-7). Jahveh offers them, for nothing, more than they could ever buy (v. 2); his own enduring covenant, once promised to David and his house (2 Sam. vii. 9 ff.); for David, in the future, either as an idealized individual, or perhaps in the person of one of his actual descendants, like Zerubbabel, who was to take a prominent part in the drama of the restoration, is to be witness of Jahveh's sovereignty and a ruler of the destinies (no mere conqueror; the prophets never looked forward to earthly political aggrandisement), not of Zion only but of the nations (vv. 3, 4). But the prophet is thinking, not so much of David, as of the nation; and Israel is to summon the nations, in the name of Jahveh, to its obedience (v. 5).

And now the whole prophecy concludes in a final poem of exalted challenge and promise (vv. 6-13), in which the previous motifs find one last and clear expression. 'Now is the time! Repent, for deliverance is at hand!' There has been no such clear reference to repentance before; but as the crisis approaches, the author is forced into explicitness to those to whom he has already addressed so many fervent appeals (v. 6, 7). Jahveh's thoughts are far above the sordid cares that occupy them—as high as heaven (vv. 8, 9); and as the rain comes down from heaven to satisfy men's needs on earth, so Jahveh's word shall do its appointed work in their midst. The thought of Jahveh's word as a living thing is characteristic of the Hebrew prophets. The return needs no military power to accomplish it; it will be the work of joy and peace; mountain and cultivated land alike will rejoice with the home-comers; the ancient doom of man's expulsion from Eden will be reversed (Gen. iii. 17 f.), as, in the change from Zion's desolation to her prosperity, Jahveh's name is known and revered for ever.

ISAIAH XIII-XIV. 23

Two odes on the forthcoming ruin of Babylon (xiii. 2-22, and xiv. 4 b-23). The first breathes strong excitement throughout, and much of it suggests the eschatological language familiar in later prophetic writings (e. g. vv. 10-13). The earlier verses, however, are clearly concerned with the calamity of a single country, and are in the manner of earlier prophecies on the day of Jahveh, except that the 'day' is not now directed against Israel but her foe; and the later verses leave no doubt as to their object. The poem is certainly a unity, and is composed of six strophes (see below). In spite of the editorial note in xiii. 1, it can hardly date from any period save the years shortly before the conquest of Babylon by Cyrus, contemporaneous, that is, with some of the poems of 2nd Isaiah. The tone, however, is very different, and on a distinctly lower religious level. Jahveh is here primarily the vengeful destroyer of Babylon rather than the faithful deliverer of his people.

This poem is concluded with a few sentences of prose (xiv. 1, 2) and a prose introduction to the succeeding ode follows (xiv. 3, 4 a). This ode, a *parable* (v. 4) or taunt-song against the king of the ruined Babylon, is reminiscent of Ezek. ch. xxxii. vv. 18-32, where the king of Egypt is driven down to the world of the dead, and is there greeted with opprobrium by the armies of the different nations assembled before him, Elam, Ashur, Meshech, Tyre, and the rest. Here the other nations are not mentioned by name (at the end of the exile they would not be thought of as naturally as at its beginning); but the satire is even more elaborate and pointed. One passage also reminds us of Ezekiel's other famous ode, on the prince of Tyre (ch. xxviii. 11-19). This poem, like that in ch. xiii, is divided into strophes, four in all. It is noteworthy that both poems expect a terrible military disaster to fall on the city. Here they doubtless reflect the expectation of the Jews, and perhaps of the city as a whole, in view of the meteor-like career of Cyrus. (The actual event was very different; see p. 142). For this reason they are probably somewhat later than Is. xl-lv, where the audience of the poet does not yet share his own soaring hope.



A PERSIAN PEASANT: IRAQ

NOTES

CHAPTER XIII, 2-22. 1st Strophe, 2-4: The nations are to be collected against Babylon (the *gates of the nobles*, v. 2, probably refers to Bab-ilu, Babylon, literally 'gate of God'), in the mountains to the East. Cyrus, king of Anshan, had united the Medes with the Persians. 2nd Str., 5-8: Mysterious and terrible, they are to scatter paralysing fear far and wide. Many of the phrases here are found in Joel and elsewhere, to describe the final calamity, either on Israel or her oppressors, which the prophets call the 'day of Jahveh'. 3rd Str., vv. 9-12: The poet dwells further on Jahveh's *day*, and its terrifying atmospheric accompaniments. It is to introduce a moral purge for the whole world, and (v. 12) universal depopulation. 4th Str., 13-16: The terrors in the sky have their counterpart on earth; the foreigners will hastily return (v. 14 b), and the usual horrors of capture will follow. 5th Str., 17-19: Now for the first time the Medes are mentioned; they would be better known in Babylon than the Persians; their soldiers, implacable and not to be bought off with bribes. 6th Str., 20-2: Not even nomads or wandering shepherds will approach the ruins. Uncanny wild beasts, and, perhaps, the spirits of the desert, will make them their lair.

CHAPTER XIV. 4 b-21. 1st Str., 4 b-8: The relief of the whole earth when the Babylonian terror has been removed. *Golden city*, conjectural translation of an unintelligible word. Perhaps 'turmoil'. Note the quiet humour of v. 8. The Babylonians, like the Assyrians before them, had made great inroads on the forests in their conquered territories. 2nd Str., 9-11: Appearance of the fallen monarch in *Hell* (Sheol). The land of the dead is thrown into excitement; the shades as a whole, the dead chieftains, and then the kings, are roused to meet the new-comer, and to rejoice that he is as weak as they. Ezekiel xxxii. 18 ff. suggests that there were higher and lower places in Sheol, and assigns his new-comer, Pharaoh, to the lowest (cf. v. 15 below). 3rd Str., 12-15: Nemesis. The typical king (hardly the reigning king, Nabonidus) like the proudest of the stars of heaven, is represented as a semi-divine being, determined to usurp the place of the supreme; to claim a place in the (fabled) mountain home of the gods in the far North. Hence his dramatic fall. (For another reference to mythology, cf. Ezekiel, ch. xxviii. 11 ff.) 4th Str., 16-19: Continuation of

the scene in Sheol. Here the new-comer is not received by the rest, but thrust away from them. Note the graphic touches in v. 17 fin., and *clothed with the slain*, v. 19, referring apparently to exposure of the king's body on the field of battle. 5th Str., 20-1: Conclusion. The king has brought ruin on his own people; but he is to have no successors to carry on his crimes. Vv. 22 f. form a prose addition. In its imaginative exaltation, the poem reminds us of Aeschylus' *Persae*. The Persians flung down the Babylonians, only (in spite of Cyrus and Darius I) to carry on the Babylonian traditions.

ISAIAH XXI. 1-10

A vision of the fall of Babylon which, from the references to Media and Elam, appears to point to its capture by Cyrus, and not, as has often been maintained, to its capture by Sargon in 710. The vision is editorially called a *burden* or 'oracle', the title given to most of the poems in this collection (Is. xiii-xxiii); but it differs from the rest in that it seems to be a close description of an actual psychical experience. The visionary is first aware of tumult and confusion; then he connects this with the two fierce enemies of Babylon, and he is flung into a paroxysm of nightmare panic. The vision then changes; he sees a banquet spread, but a sentinel is set in case of a hostile advance. This sentinel he regards in his dream-consciousness as himself, and he is bidden to watch for an ordered and disciplined military advance. The expectation is fulfilled, and a large force of cavalry is seen. The dream-sentinel knows what it means; Babylon is fallen. Such, cries the visionary to his afflicted fellow-exiles, trodden down like corn on the threshing floor, is the vision which I have received from Jahveh.

NOTES

1. *South*; Hebrew, *negeb*, which may refer not to southern Judah, as is usual, but to the plain south of the Tigris, over which the attack on Babylon was to come.

5 fin. The sudden call that ends the feast (as in Byron's famous verses on the eve of Waterloo). To *anoint the shield* is to make it ready for battle (2 Sam. i. 21).

7. It has been thought that this reference to the invading army is a piece of post-hypnotic suggestion ; i. e. due to the narrator's memory of what he sees in v. 8. But it may equally well have been his expectation.

8. *as a lion* should probably be 'as a watchman'.

9. The imagination leaps forward to the result of the invasion. The objective and detached character of this vision will be noticed. The writer does not point the moral, nor does he express sympathy with the waiting body of exiles. In fact, these three poems express quite different attitudes. The authenticity of each, and especially of the last, is shown by the fact that each expects a dramatic attack and the destruction of the city, and not at all what actually took place.

JEREMIAH L-LI. 58

Jeremiah, like Ezekiel (see p. 80, and vol. iii. p. 194) did not include Babylon among the foreign nations against which he prophesied. He was neutral or even benevolent, and was recognized as such by the Babylonian authorities after the fall of Jerusalem. But he did not expect the power of Babylon to be permanent ; he placed the duration of the exile as, roughly, two generations (seventy years), and in ch. li. 59-64 is an account of a prophecy of the fate of the empire which he wrote in a document and sank in the Euphrates. The long and elaborate prophecy, or rather collection of prophecies, against Babylon, which is found in chh. l-li. 58, probably owed its present place to its having been regarded as the substance of this document. But to assign it to Jeremiah is a psychological impossibility. The dominant conceptions of Jeremiah are entirely wanting (e. g. the guilt of Judah, forcing her destruction, the activity of Babylon as the instrument of Jahveh's justice, and the necessity of a change of heart). The attitude is rather that of 2nd Isaiah or still more of Is. xiii (see above), since Judah's sin is regarded as being now forgiven, and the author is filled with triumphant thoughts of the vengeance that is to fall on her oppressor. The songs appear to be independent of one another ; they are connected in subject-matter and point of view rather than in thought ; and there are repetitions and inconsistencies. Like the three poems noticed above, they should be dated for the most part from a time when the fall of the



A MODERN MESOPOTAMIAN

empire was almost certain, but when the collapse of the Babylonian resistance and Cyrus' magnanimous treatment of his foe was unimagined.

NOTES

CHAPTER L. 2-5. General announcement of the coming fall of Babylon. The foe is not yet mentioned by name, but is to come from the North whence the Medes would come, as the Babylonian armies themselves, for Jeremiah, had come from the North against Judah. The exiles will then return, conscious of their previous sins, and eager for a new covenant with Jahveh. The reference to Bel and Marduk (v. 2) recalls Isa. xlvi. 1, and vv. 4, 5 read like a reminiscence of Jer. xxxi.

6-16. The exiles have been like an ill-treated flock of sheep; now they are to escape from the deserved ruin that is to fall upon Babylon; and the poem ends with a shout of exultation over the city, surrounded by her enemies, and made to suffer the woes she had inflicted on others. This section, too, has many echoes of previous oracles; the dishonest shepherds recall Ezek. xxxiv; the plea of the *adversaries* (7) the words of the Babylonian officer in Jer. xl. 3; and v. 8, the cry in Is. xlviii. 20. All these poems emphasize the coming desolation of Mesopotamia which Turkish rule finally accomplished. Hatred against the enemy is lifted into indignation against his wickedness.

17-20. Quiet and confident anticipation of restoration and pardon. Fresh hope is drawn from the memory of the downfall of Assyria. Here also Jahveh does not simply deliver Israel but punishes Babylon. Nebuchadnezzar is the typical Babylonian oppressor, not Nabonidus (note the more correct but less usual spelling *Nebuchadrezzar*, as in Jer. xxi-xxv).

21-32. Another outburst of exultation, in which the destruction of the empire is now thought of as accomplished, and now as still future. *Merathaim* (v. 21), 'double rebellion', probably refers to Marratim, the name of southern Babylonia: *Pekod*, 'visitation' is also a proper name (cf. Ezek. xxiii. 23). For such 'puns' cf. Isa. x. 28 ff., Mic. i. 10 ff. For *against it* (v. 1) read 'Elam'.

26. *as heaps*, of spoil, or, of ruins. *destroy her utterly*, i. e. place her under the ban, like Jericho, Josh. vi. 17; cf. Deut. xiii. 16.

28. *in Zion*, cf. Is. xl. 9; southern Palestine was still inhabited; the exiles were only a portion of the population.

33-46. After a brief picture of the waiting exiles, recalling the story of Israel in Egypt, follows a striking 'sword-song' (cf. Ezek. xxi), and another on the desolation of Babylon. Then, by a rapid transition, the poet sees the hosts assembling, and the panic they inspire, and Jahveh's doom upon the defeated.

33. Israel (the northern kingdom) is here joined with Judah, as in v. 19, and Jer. xxxi. That both parts of the nation would be restored, as well as the rest of the Diaspora, was the continuous expectation of the prophets. The tone of excitement should be noted in vv. 35 ff., also the vagueness of the allusions to the invaders. The later part of the poem is full of reminiscences and, perhaps, imitations. For v. 40, cf. Is. xiii. 19, xlix. 18; for vv. 41-3, cf. Jer. vi. 22-4; for vv. 44-6, cf. Jer. xlix. 19-21.

CHAPTER LI. 1-14. Another call to destroy the city, followed by an appeal to Israel to leave it; Israel replies, as being now ready for the task announced by 2nd Isaiah, and she is answered by another cry of war, and a song of triumph. The transitions are rapid, and, as before, the poet speaks as if he saw the events happening before his eyes.

1. *Leb-kamai*: explained in R.V. marg. as 'the centre of those that rise against me', a cipher for Kasdim, i.e. Chaldaea. (The cipher is worked by simply substituting the last letter in the Hebrew alphabet for the first, the last but one for the second, and so on.¹)

5. *their land* apparently refers to Palestine, and the disorganized character of its religion in its desolation. Such references are rare, but this meaning would help to explain *in Zion*, v. 10; cf. l. 28.

7 reproduces the metaphor of Jer. xxv. 15 ff., but with a very different application. If v. 10 is the reply of the Israelite exiles, v. 9 seems to be that of the other foreign inhabitants of the city, compelled against their will to give up their hopes of assisting her.

13. *many waters*: the river and the numerous canals of the country.

14. *I will fill thee with enemies*: as rapacious as a swarm of locusts.

15-18. A short meditation on the power of Jahveh as opposed to the idols, in the manner of 2-Isaiah.

20-4. The song of the battle-axe; cf. l. 35-7. Babylon has been a warrior's mace in Jahveh's hand to break up the old heathen world

¹ The Hebrew name for this device was 'Atbash', an artificial word composed of the first letter, the last, the second, and the last but one, in the Hebrew alphabet.

order, military and political, social and industrial (cf. l. 23, 25). But the terrible instrument will be punished for the way in which it has done its work in Judah (cf. l. 14).

25-32. Babylon is here conceived of, strangely enough, as a mountain, turned by some terrible fire into a heap of ashes and cinders. The poet then sees once more the assembly of the nations; *Ararat*, &c. (v. 27) denote territories around Lake Van. The Medes, however, are the centre of the invading host. A further vision shows a panic at their approach, and the surrender of the city without a blow.

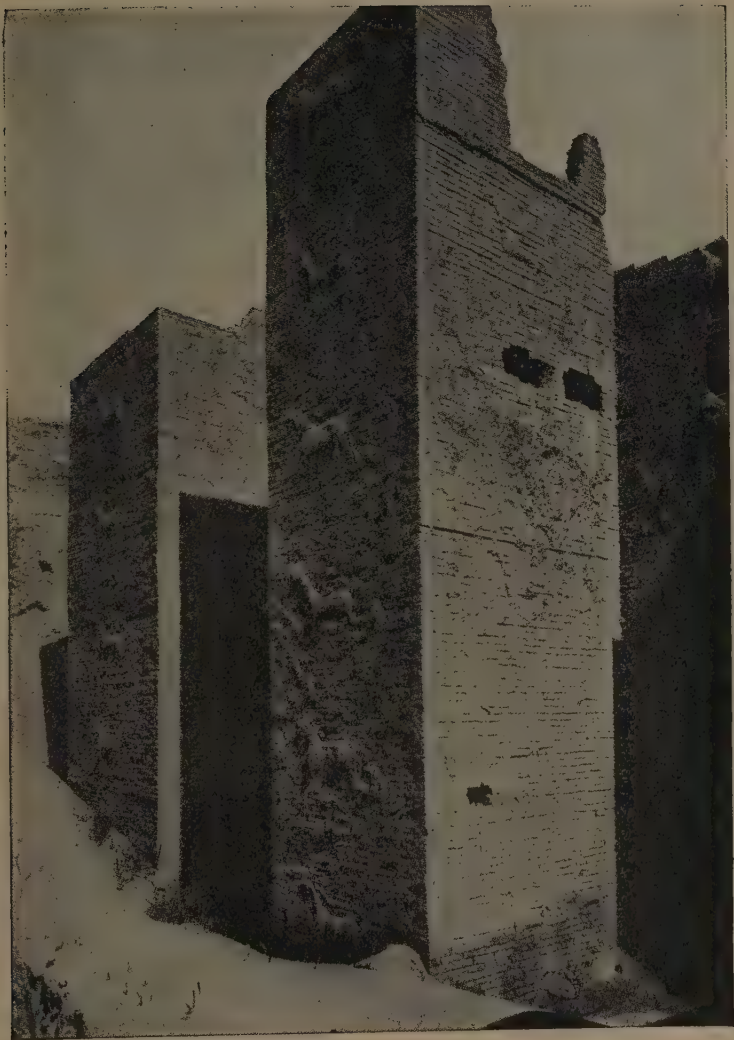
33-44. A song of vengeance for Babylon's tyranny over the captives. Babylon is to 'have double' for all the suffering she has inflicted, again an entire contrast to Jeremiah's references to Babylon. Note the transitions in metaphor in vv. 38-40. *Sheshach* (v. 41) is Babel, by the same cipher as in v. 1.

45-58. This poem begins more calmly, with an appeal to the exiles to leave the doomed city, for after a period of suspense the destruction will surely come. Is there another allusion to the Exodus? Were many of the exiles unwilling to leave? Such at least is implied by the subsequent history. The exiles reply (v. 51) that they dread going back to their own desolated country; the more certain (the poet rejoins) is Jahveh's punishment on Babylon for that outrage. Then, with rising excitement, he sees the attack; the invaders, intent on the vast spoil, sweep in like a great sea; the statesmen and generals are massacred, and the wall is flung down as Babylon flung down the wall of Jerusalem, and her imperial pride is reduced to ashes.

THE TAKING OF BABYLON

(Cyrus Cylinder)

In view of the above poems, it is interesting to refer to the account of the capture of Babylon which we have from Cyrus himself. The inscription, from which some extracts here follow, is found on a broken cylinder of baked clay, now in the British Museum. After relating how the degenerate Nabonidus alienated both his subjects and the gods, Cyrus describes how Marduk in anger 'searched in all lands everywhere, he looked through them and sought a righteous prince, after his own heart, whom



THE ISHTAR GATE, built by Nebuchadnezzar

The Taking of Babylon

he took by the hand. Cyrus, king of Anshan, he called by name; to lordship over the whole world he appointed him. . . . Marduk, the great lord, looked joyously on his care for his people, on his pious works and his righteous heart. To his city, Babylon, he made him to go, he caused him to take the road to Babylon, going as a friend and companion at his side. His numerous troops, in number unknown, like the waters of a river, marched armed at his side. Without battle and conflict he permitted him to enter Babylon. He spared his city, Babylon, a calamity. Nabonidus, the king, who did not fear him, he delivered into his hand. All the people of Babylon, of Sumer and Accad, princes and governors, fell down before him and kissed his feet. They rejoiced in his sovereignty, their faces shone. . . . I am Cyrus, king of the world, the great king, king of Babylon . . . king of the eternal seed of royalty, whose rule Bel and Nebo love, in whose government they rejoice in their heart. When I made my triumphal entrance into Babylon, with joy and rejoicing I took up my lordly residence in the royal palace; Marduk, the great king, moved the noble heart of the inhabitants of Babylon to me, while I gave daily care to his worship. My numerous troops marched peacefully into Babylon. In all Sumer and Accad I permitted no enemy to enter. The needs of Babylon and of all its cities I gladly took heed to . . . and the dishonouring yoke was removed from them. Their dwellings, which had fallen, I restored. I cleared out their ruins. Marduk, the great lord, rejoiced in my pious deeds, and graciously blessed me.'

It will be noticed that, contrary to the Jewish expectation, the city passes under the rule of Cyrus without a struggle. The invader represents himself as welcomed by the citizens and favoured by their paramount god. He does not mention his own gods, but he claims to have been 'called' and chosen by Marduk. One thinks involuntarily of the righteous 'Servant of Jahveh'. Cyrus speaks of himself as bringing to the people of Babylon what the Jews would call 'judgement' and 'law', as the 'Servant' was to bring them to the 'isles'. It is curious also that the three deities mentioned by Cyrus are the three whom we have met in the above poems, though Marduk, supreme in Cyrus's inscriptions and in actual fact, appears there to be of less importance—or at any rate, is less prominently mentioned—than Bel and Nebo. 'Sumer and Accad' is the time-honoured official title for lower and upper Mesopotamia.

HAGGAI AND ZECHARIAH I-VIII

The little book of Haggai consists of four addresses, carefully dated, the first of them being followed by a historical notice. The first address was delivered in September, 520, to Zerubbabel the governor and Joshua the high-priest. The Jews are paying attention to their own buildings, but leaving the house of Jahveh unbuilt. This culpable negligence is the reason for the bad seasons and the general lack of prosperity from which the community has suffered. The words have their effect, and before the end of the month, the people, led by the governor and the high-priest, have begun the work of building (ch. i).

By November of the same year, the community had grown discouraged, comparing the meagre results of their work with the tradition of the glories of the old Temple. Haggai bids them remember the ancient national promises, and foretells that some great world-movement will result in the flowing to the Temple of all the wealth of the world (ch. ii. 1-9).

In the following January there is still discouragement, poor crops, bad seasons, delayed harvests. This is really on account of ritual defilement. But from now onwards (the Temple being in building) there is to be divine blessing (ch. ii. 10-19).

A second address on the same day, but more vague and mysterious in tone, is delivered to Zerubbabel; there is coming a general political and even cosmic upheaval, in which Zerubbabel will become the seal-ring of Jahveh (ch. ii. 20-23).

These addresses are all matter-of-fact and prosaic; Zechariah, Haggai's contemporary, is highly imaginative and symbolic, and, priest though he is, he has much of the language, and the spirit, of the older prophets. His first brief sermon, dated December, 520 (just before Haggai's last), is an appeal for a return to obedience to the eternal laws of Jahveh (ch. i. 1-6). Three months after, he sees the first of his well-known visions. Although the earth shows no sign of the movement that might bring the longed-for change to the Jews, Jahveh is full of eager love to Jerusalem and will secure alike the building of the Temple and the return of prosperity (ch. i. 7-17). Next, under the image of four horns, the prophet learns of the coming destruction of the oppressive heathen powers (ch. i. 18-21).

A further promise, given through two angels, that Jerusalem would grow too large to be contained by any walls, is followed by a song of deliverance, which calls for the exiles still in Babylon to return, and foretells the adhesion of many nations to the Jewish community (ch. ii). In the next vision the high-priest is seen, accused by the *Satan* or adversary (as in Job, the 'advocatus diaboli'), for the wearing of unclean robes. They are removed, and Joshua is bidden to a fresh loyalty to his priestly duties; for the obscure words which close the section, see below (ch. iii).

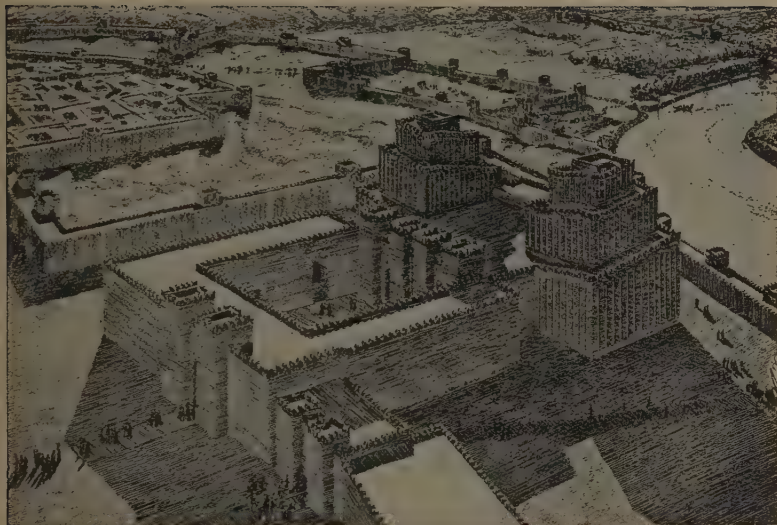
Next comes a message to Zerubbabel. The prophet sees, in symbol, Jahveh's two anointed servants, the governor and the priest, and he foretells that the governor, as he had laid the foundation stone, would also complete the Temple (ch. iv).

In the next two visions, Zechariah turns from ritual failings to immorality. He sees a curse, written on a roll, entering in to fulfil its own threats in every house where crime has found a home. Then he sees the wickedness of the people, like a woman sitting in a large measure; it is carried away to Babylon, to which it properly belongs (ch. v). Next, turning to political events, he sees four chariots, representing the four points of the compass which make him certain that Persia is to fall (ch. vi. 1-8). This is followed in its turn by an obscure narrative, which finds, in the visit of some Jews from Babylon with a contribution, a promise of regal glory for the head (probably Zerubbabel) of the community in Judaea (ch. vi. 9-15).

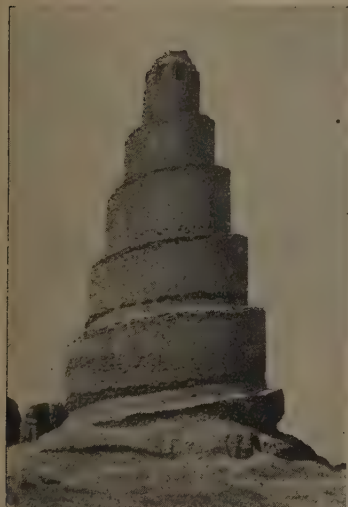
Zechariah now (in 518) adopts a straightforward manner of speech. In reply to another deputation, asking whether a fast should be continued, he presses on his hearers the paramount duty of morality. Neglect of this has been responsible for all the miseries of the past years (ch. vii). Finally (ch. viii) he utters a great prophecy of hope. Jahveh is already in Jerusalem. He will gather the Diaspora there; and all the curses of the past will be turned into blessings; but the laws of truth and justice must be kept. The fasts will become joyous festivals; and the Jew will be the acknowledged leader of the Gentile servants of Jahveh.

The character of these sections varies greatly. From ch. i. 7 to ch. vi. 8, we appear to have the actual dreams of the prophet described to us with his conclusions (naturally regarded by him as inspired) as to their meaning. The dreams in chh. iii and iv clearly go together, as also the two in ch. v. His reliance on the interpreting angel reminds the reader of Ezekiel, while

TEMPLE TOWERS



A reconstruction of the temple of Anu-Adad at Nippur, built by Shalmanezzer II (860-825). Observe the spirals on the two ziggurats. On the right is the Tigris



An Arab ziggurat (preserving the traditional architecture of Babylonian temples)



A mediaeval MS. representation of the Tower of Babel. Observe that the idea of the external spiral staircase has been preserved

much of his imagery foreshadows what is generally called Apocalyptic. His allusions throw a very welcome and even unique light on the condition of the Jews in Palestine soon after the return; while he suggests, rather tantalizingly, political and social changes in the community at which we can only guess.

Turning for the moment to the history of the period as we know it; Cyrus lived on for nine years after his capture of Babylon, till 529, when he was succeeded by his son Cambyses. Hot-tempered and violent, Cambyses set out to conquer Egypt; but while he was there, rebellions began to break out in various parts of the vast empire and a pretender appeared in Babylon itself, personating a brother of Cambyses whom the king had previously killed. Cambyses committed suicide in Egypt in 522; the usurper was driven from the throne by Darius, a member of the Persian royal family. The whole empire, however, was seething with discontent; revolts had to be put down in nearly every province; but in a few years' time the firm hand of Darius restored order (Zech. i. 11). We have few details as to the main lines of Persian policy during these years; still fewer as to its attitude to the little community in Palestine. But Darius would seem to have been the only real statesman among the Persian monarchs. Cyrus profited by the general relief at deliverance from the last years of Babylonian misgovernment, and the announcement of his own good intentions; Cambyses had allowed the fissiparous tendencies of his unwieldy empire to manifest themselves everywhere. To Darius fell the task of uniting the provinces, by his system of satraps or intendants (to borrow an eighteenth-century term), to the capital and the court. We may hazard the conjecture that he would keep a vigilant eye on conditions in Palestine. For Judaea was still of vital importance for Persian communications with Egypt; and Jewish aspirations, even if to us, on the lips of the prophets, they sound predominantly religious, would seem political enough to be dangerous to the Persian overlord.

The study of Haggai and Zechariah confirms this impression. Both prophets are silent as to any influx of population after 539, or as to the existence of two sections in the population of the province, new-comers from Babylon, and the descendants of the survivors of 586 in Palestine. They describe very clearly a disheartened and impoverished community, but they do not refer either to the racial or the economic and social distinctions which became so prominent later on. Haggai's programme for

the future is limited to the rebuilding of the Temple; but Zechariah has drunk more deeply of the spirit of his predecessors, and in at least two addresses (chh. ii, viii) predicts what



Portrait of Darius I

From the Behistun Bas-Relief (p. 23)

might easily be understood (or misunderstood) as political independence and sovereignty, while the terms in which he speaks of the two leaders of the community (chh. iv, vi) echo a Messianic hope which would certainly be unwelcome to the Persian representatives in the country.

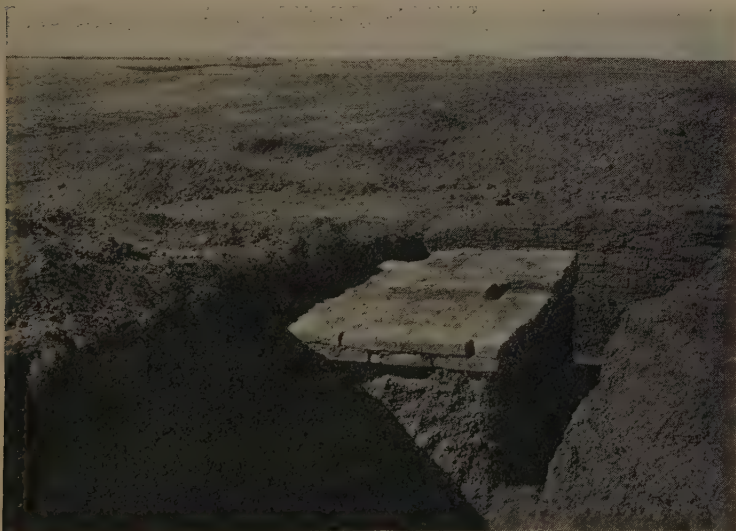
Of greater interest to us is what we can learn of the religious attitude of the time. Idolatry is unmentioned. We hear nothing of the local shrines that preceded, and, as it would seem, survived, the reformation of Josiah. As archaeology also suggests, the fall of the Judæan state in 586 ended, at least for the time, the influence of the rites and superstitions of Canaan. Nor do we hear of any rivalry between prophets and priests, or between true and false prophets. The priests indeed are regarded as important and respected if not leading members of the community, and the relations between Zerubbabel and Joshua are in harmony with what is implied by Ezekiel's references to the prince and the priests (chh. xlv, xlvi), except that Zechariah seems (for reasons stated below) to attribute a higher rôle to the prince than did Ezekiel.

To judge from the addresses he has left us, life for Haggai is a very simple matter. Prosperity and adversity depend merely on attention or inattention to ritual and its equipment. Jahveh's one command is 'rebuild!' That calamity could result from moral deficiencies—the conception so deeply rooted in the pre-exilic prophets from Amos onward—lies outside his thought. Zechariah is different. He does not repeat Haggai's simple alternative. And we may suspect that for that reason he was not so immediately impressive to the mass of his hearers. But he is in the prophetic succession as Haggai is not. The law of life for him is moral rather than ritual or ecclesiastical. The command that is to be obeyed is the command to return from the evil ways and doings of the past (ch. i. 4). And Jahveh is more than the paymaster of a company of builders. He is the gracious God who watches over His people and sends His angel to speak with comfortable words; who is jealous for them, and will dwell in their midst; who bids them hope for a future when Jerusalem shall be the joy and centre of the whole earth.

Two questions remain. Were Haggai and Zechariah among the Jews who returned from the East? There are no allusions to Babylon or the exile, and no clear references to exilic prophecy. The subject-matter of Haggai indeed is so confined that we could hardly expect such allusions; though if he had known and shared in the glowing hopes of 2nd Isaiah it is strange that he should have been so silent with regard to them. Zechariah, on the other hand, may be said to possess the general outlook of 2nd Isaiah, but 2nd Isaiah's distinctive conceptions are as absent as those of the author of the Servant Songs. Neither of the prophecies suggests an appeal by a member of the minority in the community to the rest, nor to the remainder of the minority.

Either then we must suppose that the great emotions of 539 had sunk into forgetfulness, or that the two prophets are voicing the higher aspirations of a more or less homogeneous community which had no conscious associations with the return from exile.

Second, was the law of the community identical with Deuteronomy? On the generally accepted view that Deuteronomy had been adopted as authoritative in 621, and that the Priestly Code was not promulgated till the time of Ezra, an affirmative



Allar in the side-chapel of the goddess Ishtar, at Kish

answer would seem to be necessary. It does not indeed follow that because a legal document was accepted as authoritative by the government in Jerusalem in 621, it would be so regarded in 520 by the descendants of the old régime. The last chapters of Ezekiel would suggest that even by the exiles it was not universally regarded as final. We cannot say how far, at the Persian conquest, it was revered in Mesopotamia, or whether, after 539, influences from Babylon were strong enough in Judaea to have enforced it. On the other hand, some sort of legal system was certainly established in the Jewish community under Zerubabel. This is clear from the position accorded to Joshua in

the addresses of Zechariah, and the reference to the Torah of the priests in Haggai. But was the Torah which these priests administered identical with our book of Deuteronomy, or as much of it as was known to Josiah? The appeal to the priests which Haggai suggests would not be answered from Deuteronomy, but, if at all, from the later Priests' Code. This, however, proves little; for a legal or ritual principle may have been known and followed long before it could be inserted in a code that happens to have come down to us. Deuteronomy itself does not pretend to be an exhaustive statement of Torah. And though Joshua took his stand by the side of the civil governor, we cannot tell from Zechariah what was the law which he administered, and whether it was the usage which the more scrupulous Jews in Babylon had preserved and extended. We shall see that Deuteronomy, if not the Priests' Code, was revered in the middle of the next century. For 520, we can but say that obedience to a body of law, whether actually written in a code or not, was understood as a part (to Haggai, it would seem, as the most important part) of religion; and that (for those under the influence of Zechariah) ritual observance and morality went together as they had been joined in the code of Deuteronomy a century before.

NOTES ON HAGGAI

CHAPTER I. I-II. The first message of Haggai, shortly after the accession of Darius, when the building of the Temple was generally thought to be inopportune. Haggai points to the scandal of the Temple lying waste while private houses are finished, and bids his hearers reflect on their lack of real prosperity. Let them start building operations. Their troubles rise from their neglect; they have been caused by Jahveh, who will, so long as they think of their own houses and dwellings more than of his, allow them no success.

The beginning of Darius's reign was occupied in overthrowing Gomates, the 'Magian' usurper; after Gomates' death in the autumn of 521 there were further rebellions; hence, Haggai's message came at a time when there was hope of autonomy. Darius would be wise in not stirring up trouble in the West when he had the East on his hands. Jewish tradition does not connect Haggai with the priesthood. The name suggests 'my festivals', as Malachi suggests 'my messenger'. Zerubbabel is the son of Shealtiel here, as in Ezra v. 1 and

Luke iii. 27. In 1 Chron. iii. 19 he is the son of Pedaiiah, a brother of Shealtiel. In Chron. their father is Jeconiah, the deposed king of Judah; in Luke, Neri. In any case the Persians, more hopeful than Nebuchadnezzar when he turned to Gedaliah, found in Zerubabel a native prince to administer the province. This is the first occurrence of the title *high* (Heb., 'great') priest, although the office is familiar from the accounts of Eli, Zadok, and Amaziah of Bethel (Am. vii. 10).

2. This plea seems itself to be a reply to a previous appeal. In Ezra v. 16 the foundations had already been laid under the obscure Sheshbazzar (see p. 165).

4. A question like that which David asked of himself, 2 Sam. vii. 2. *Cieled*, however, is more appropriate to David's palace or the houses of the rich before the exile (Jer. xxii. 14) than to houses to be found in Jerusalem in Haggai's days.

6. Amos (v. 6 ff. &c.) had rationalized national calamities, but in a very different fashion. Note the rather 'pawky' humour of the passage; the wine is not enough to get drunk on, and the wage-earner's purse lets his poor earnings all run out.

8. *the mountain*: timber for the Temple had been obtained from Lebanon; but there was wood to be got from the hills of central Palestine. *I will be glorified* by some great manifestation, of an apocalyptic or eschatological character, as is foreshadowed by Zech. ii. 9 and Mal. iv. 1.

10. The rainfall of Palestine, though, it would seem, more abundant than at present, was always uncertain.

for your sake: to influence you, and not out of mere caprice or chance.

11. The prosperity of the country depended on the agriculture of small holdings and not on trade or manufacture. This verse, however, should apparently follow v. 6.

CHAPTER II. 1-9; after an interval of a month and a half, but less than a month from the time when, roused by the previous address, the operations had been taken in hand. As soon as the building begins another fit of despondency supervenes. A few had seen the first Temple, and doubtless told the younger generation that its like would never be seen again. Haggai, if the text is right, appeals to the stirring traditions of the Exodus, and foretells a great and cosmic movement which would bring the wealth of the world to

glorify the Temple. There might be little money in the impoverished community; but Jahveh possessed the monetary resources of the world.

2, 4. Joshua is as important as Zerubbabel for the work of rebuilding; and here the body of the people are definitely appealed to as well as their leaders. Later on (but not here), *people of the land* is the term for the lower classes, less educated and less religious.

5 a does not appear in the LXX, and 5 b, reading 'abides' for *abode*, follows best directly on v. 4.

6. Haggai expects that the political disorders of the time will result in a great upheaval of nature, which will bring all the *desirable*, i.e. precious and costly, possessions of the nations into the new Temple. All that is needed now is courage and vigour. It will then be the old and ruined Temple that will suffer by comparison.

9. *peace*: the word means more than the mere absence of war—economic and social stability.

10-19. We are now, two months later, nearing the middle of winter. In this discourse Haggai makes no reference to the Temple operations, but he is concerned about the problem of his first address, and the crops. He wishes to point out a reason for scarcity, not simply in neglect but in some kind of ritual uncleanness. Under the form of an inquiry from the priests, he states the principle of the communicability of ceremonial uncleanness, and urges that some uncleanness has vitiated the work on the Temple; hence the economic troubles. The priests are appealed to for their instruction on points of ceremonial. The laity would go to them, exactly as a client would go to a solicitor to-day on some point of law, rather than to any written legal code. By the side of this 'torah' or instruction, the priests, like other officials, had their 'mishpatim' or judgements, i.e. the decisions to be given in certain defined cases, like the Roman praetors' 'responsa' (see above, p. 51). The priests were naturally the special guardians of the law of the holy and the unclean. This law was of great importance, for its infraction or neglect might have the gravest consequences, both in the worship at the altar and in the ordinary affairs of life. Holiness was the quality which effectually cut off a person, place, or thing, from common use; and it could be communicated, though (v. 12) not more than one remove. It was necessary to guard against such communication, since to profane, i.e. use in the ordinary way, a thing that was or had become holy, might mean death (cf. Uzzah's fate, 2 Sam. vi. 6f.). Uncleanness, on the other hand, was the quality

which put a person, place, or thing, so to speak, 'in quarantine', debarred from all worship and from all social intercourse. Its infraction was communicable at the second remove (v. 13); and to bring the unclean into the presence of the holy was the worst kind of profanation. What then is the point of the answer of the priests (v. 14)? Neglect of the first of the two questions seems to mean that the community had erred by transmitting uncleanness in their actual worship, and so 'profaning' Jahveh, the source of all holiness. They had contracted unholiness in their ordinary activity or industry, and hence their offerings at the altar, derived therefrom, were unclean. Haggai then bids them consider the past before the building operations were begun. All their efforts were dogged by futility, as he had told them in his first address (vv. 16, 17). V. 18 can hardly be right as it stands. It suggests that the foundation-stone was laid on the twenty-fourth day of the ninth month. But this is the day on which Haggai is speaking (v. 10). If we may follow Ezra iii. 10, the stone had been laid long before Haggai began to prophesy, as is also implied by Zech. viii. 9. The Ezra passage, however, may not be historical; and in that case, unless the date is a gloss, we must suppose that after the progress which had been already made, the stone is only just being laid, and that Haggai chooses this particular occasion for his rather sinister words. But if so, what of the questions in v. 19, 'have you yet gathered the harvest?' The answer, in December, could only be 'of course not; why ask?' Haggai's meaning seems to be 'consider what your conduct has been; alter it, and your difficulties will be over. The harvest is still in the future; and from this day, if you will reform, Jahveh will give you the long-delayed prosperity.'

Another explanation of the passage, however, may be noted. It has been suggested that vv. 10-14 should be removed, as referring not to the difficulties of which Haggai speaks elsewhere, but to the question of the relations of Jews and Samaritans. The answer to the application of the illustration will then be that the Jews have made themselves unclean by contact with the Samaritans, and therefore their offerings are of no avail, and the 'works of their hands' are unclean; their whole life is vitiated. Vv. 15-19 will then follow (it is suggested) ch. i. 11, and, taking v. 18 as a gloss, v. 19 would imply that then, in August, the harvest was seriously delayed, but that a turning-point had arrived. The transposition of vv. 15-19 is tempting, but unnecessary, and where will vv. 10-14 have come from? We might connect it with Ezra iv. 1-3; but although Ezra attributes the conflict with the Samaritans to the time of Zerubbabel, there is nothing in

either Haggai or Zechariah to suggest such antagonism; and had it then been at all acute, we could hardly explain the silence of the two prophets.

NOTES ON ZECHARIAH I-VIII

CHAPTER I. 7-17. Zechariah, who (if the Iddo of Zech. i. 1 is identical with the Iddo of Neh. xii. 4) was a young priest, had already begun his work before the last address of Haggai. His second address is in February 520, when the news of Darius's successful pacification of his realm has caused deep disappointment in Judah and elsewhere. What prospect could there be now of Haggai's anticipations of the shaking of heaven and earth? In answer, Zechariah relates his vision, the first of a series of eight. Were they real visions, or only prophetic discourses cast into a more or less conventional literary form? The latter is the generally accepted opinion; but against this is the difficulty (specially great in Zechariah's case) of accounting for the bizarre and incongruous elements in the passages. Without assuming (as some scholars have done) that all the prophetic utterances had an ecstatic character, it would seem probable that what are related as visions are actually psychic experiences, related subsequently in the form in which they are remembered and modified by the prophets' interpretations. The prophets do not speak of them as dreams (the dream had an unfortunate association for the prophets, cf. Jer. xxiii. 27 f.), but they can only be understood if something of the dream-consciousness in them is allowed for. Cf. v. 8, *in the night*. The prophet sees one man, on a red horse, and other horses of three different colours, in a grove of myrtle bushes in the *hollow* (of the Kidron?). The *man*, who is called in v. 9 an angel (unless the angel talking with Zechariah is a distinct person), points him to the riders on the other horses, who then announce that they have ridden through the earth and found it quiet. The angel then cries for pity on Jerusalem, left desolate for seventy years (observe that nothing is said about a return from exile in 539; but seventy years, foretold in Jeremiah xxix. 10, formed almost the exact interval between this vision and the catastrophe of 586). Jahveh replies with an expression of his zealous love for Jerusalem, and his anger on the nations who, when he was but a little angry with Jerusalem, went beyond his anger in their ill-treatment of the Jews (v. 15). Hence the Temple is to be built, the city is to be restored (the *line* is for the purpose of laying it out, v. 16) and prosperity and comfort are to return.

CHAPTER III. The ordeal of Joshua the high priest before Jahveh's angel, with the 'advocatus diaboli' present. The narrative is introduced by the words *he (Jahveh) showed me*, and it may well refer to a dream or vision, related in the light of subsequent reflection. Jahveh himself does not appear, but his *angel* or 'messenger' (in v. 2 *Jahveh said to the adversary* should, in the light of what follows, be 'the angel of Jahveh'); Zechariah has here probably been influenced by Ezekiel's last vision; contrast Amos vii. 1, &c., and Jer. i. 7, 12, &c.

2. *a brand*, the phrase is borrowed from Amos iv. 11, but the meaning is different. Joshua is clothed with *filthy garments* (v. 3); he has shown himself unworthy of the priesthood, but he is to be reinstated and his functions are to have their due splendour. If his conduct is correct, he will be established (cf. Jer. xv. 19). He will be the supreme authority in the Temple, and have the privilege of immediate access to Jahveh. Thus, Joshua and the rest of the priesthood will be *for a sign* (v. 8), i.e. a pledge for the happiness of the community. (The reference to the *branch*, which in ch. vi. 12 is Zerubbabel, would appear to be misplaced here.) And now Joshua receives the priestly ornament of a stone, with seven eyes or facets, engraved by Jahveh himself (cf. Ezek. xxviii. 13), and with this mark of holiness the whole community is cleansed and its piety and prosperity assured for the future.

The *Satan* or adversary (the title is not a proper name) appears three times in the Old Testament; here, where his role is to accuse (apparently with some justice), and nothing is said as to his character, human or super-human; in Job i. 11, ii. 1, where he appears in the heavenly court of Jahveh, as one of the 'sons of God' scrutinizing and reporting on what passes as goodness on the earth; and once in the well-known passage in Chronicles (1 Chron. xxi. 1) where he, and not Jahveh himself, as in 1 Sam. xxiv. 1, induces David to commit the sin of numbering the nation. The conception is post-exilic, doubtless influenced by oriental thought; but the 'devil' as the arch-foe of mankind, does not appear in the O.T.

We can only surmise the occasion of this vision; but it seems clear that Joshua, like many a high-priest in later Judaism, had proved false to the requirements of his own rubric and moral code.

CHAPTER IV. The account of another dream (as v. 1 would seem expressly to imply), which is interpreted as emphasizing the functions

and responsibilities of Joshua and Zerubbabel as the twin supports of the restored régime. The description of the lamp-stand, at once rich and illuminating, and two olive-trees, one on either side of it, to supply it with oil, passes easily into the explanatory conversation. Zechariah now speaks of *the angel that talked with me* as if he had become as familiar as Michael and Catharine were to Joan of Arc. It will be noticed that the lamp-stand or candelabrum is different from those in Solomon's Temple (1 Kings vii. 49) or that of the (later) passage in Exod. xxv. 31 ff. The oil from the bowl or reservoir is conveyed to each of the lamps or open vessels, where the wick floats on the oil, by a separate pipe. The angel appears to be surprised that Zechariah does not understand what he sees. His own explanation, however, is given in v. 10 b, which should connect directly with v. 6 a. The candelabrum is symbolical of Jahveh, and the lamps are his eyes which search the whole earth. Zechariah then asks as to the olive trees (v. 11).

v. 12 seems to be the gloss of an editor who has strangely misunderstood the point of the vision. They are the two *sons of oil* (v. 14), i. e. connected in some way with oil, anointed persons, who are placed beside Jahveh. Zerubbabel and Joshua are obviously meant; and the purpose of the vision is thus understood as confirming the loyalty of the community to its two heads. In vv. 6 b-10 a is embedded another oracle, to Zerubbabel alone, promising that he will be able to complete the building of the Temple, and recalling the spirit of Hag. ii. 3 ff.

CHAPTER V. 5-11. While the little society and its leaders sway between hopes and fears, Zechariah is moved by fear as well as hope as he thinks not only of the spirit of the leaders but the morals of the community. After his companion angel has explained the flying scroll, he points out another object, which is identified as an *ephah*, a measure which should contain some thirty-two quarts (does the prophet here recall Ezekiel xlv. 11, with its demand for honest and reliable measures—always a pressing need in Oriental countries?). This, it is explained, is wickedness (read 'awon for 'ayin, 'eye' or, as R.V., 'resemblance'). The vision now becomes more dream-like. The ephah is seen to be large enough to contain a woman, whom the prophet can see, though a round piece or disc of lead (Heb. *kikkar*, circle, also means, though not here, 'talent') lies on the ephah. The woman is then imprisoned beneath the disc, and two other women, like storks, carry the ephah into the sky; the woman, Zechariah

is told, is to be transplanted to Shinar or Babylon, to be securely established there.

The angel's explanation does not clear up all the obscurity. What is the wickedness, and why is it to be carried to Babylon? Is the wickedness the commercial immorality (as the word 'ephah' would suggest) constantly attacked by the older prophets, and is it to be transferred from Judah to the exiles still in Babylon? This would imply a satiric and bitter attitude in the prophet of which there is no other trace. Or does the woman suggest idolatry (the prophet may have been thinking of Aholah and Aholibamah in Ezek. xxiii), to be carried to the true home of idolatry, as 2-Is. had felt Babylon to be, there to be deposited in one of the great 'houses' or temples? This on the face of it is easier, but the prophet does not elsewhere refer to idolatry in Judaea, although we know that it was a menace in the next generation.

CHAPTER VI. 9-15. The crown to be made for the *Branch*. The visions come to an end with vi. 1-8. The prophet now feels himself commanded to take silver and gold from some men belonging to the *captivity*, i. e. persons who had returned, lately or at an earlier time, from Babylon; in our present text these persons are three in number, Heldai, Tobijah, and Jedaiah. But a comparison with v. 14 suggests that they should be four, the above along with the son of Zephaniah, omitting the words *Come thou . . . house of* in v. 10, and *Hen* (as a dittograph for *ben*, 'son of') in v. 14. Otherwise Josiah is presumably a goldsmith. *Crowns* (v. 11) should probably be in the singular, as also in v. 14. *Joshua* can hardly be right. In view of iii. 8 and iv. 7, 9, the person named the Branch, who is also the completer of the Temple, is Zerubbabel; and the functions of the wearer of the crown in ch. vi are not priestly but regal. By a play on the name, this person, the Branch, or Shoot, is to shoot out of the soil beneath him (v. 12) and, after the Temple is complete, to reign in glory. By his side is to be a priest (translate, in v. 13, 'and there shall (also) be a priest upon his throne, i. e. by the side of the king; and the two are to act in harmony, in the counsel of peace'). The crown, having thus been made for Zerubbabel, is to be entrusted to the care of these four men (see above) as a memorial or reminder of the prediction. Fired by this hope, the prophet foresees (in v. 15, if it is in its right place) the coming of the Gentiles (cf. Hag. ii. 6), or perhaps the exiles still in Babylon, to carry on the building operations. The last clause of the verse (*and it shall be, if . . .*) is a fragment which has

somehow found its way into the text; and the clause in front, if genuine, shows that Zechariah expected, when the prophecy was fulfilled, to silence the doubts which had arisen about his commission. The passage recalls the dealings of Jeremiah with Hanamel and the Rechabites (Jer. chh. xxxii and xxxv); the prophet in either case appears to be conscious of a strong impulse to some transaction with his contemporaries, and then he sees the inner significance of what he is doing.

CHAPTER VIII, 1-16. In spite of the foregoing, there is still much religious insincerity and social oppression and violence (ch. vii). But the prophet's faith is too strong to be daunted. He begins an address quite in the manner of the older prophets, with *The word of Jahveh came unto me saying*, and compares the melancholy present and past with the glorious future. Jahveh's *jealousy* or *zeal* (Is. ix. 7) is his indignant reaction against anything (from without or within the nation) that interferes with his claims over his own people. Now, in place of immorality, is to be *truth*, and in place of insincerity, holiness (v. 3). Instead of the poverty and insecurity which meant a high death-rate both among the old and the very young, old men and children would be numerous and free from fear. Moreover, the Jews of the Diaspora would be brought back; not only the exiles from Babylon, but from East and West alike (v. 7); there were already many Jews in Egypt, and probably Jews had begun to travel elsewhere in search of a living. Verse 8 recalls the great prophecy of Jeremiah (ch. xxxi. 31). Zechariah then reminds his hearers of the prophecies when the rebuilding was started; from the completion of the Temple a new era is to begin. The old days of unemployment and confusion, when Jahveh himself *set all men* against one another (v. 10), are at an end. This new era is described much as Jeremiah described it, as a time of solid but quiet agricultural prosperity (though not in such glowing terms as in the last verses of Amos), expanding into the thought of 2-Is., that the returned community was to be a blessing to the whole earth. Jahveh's former purpose, consequent on the nation's sin, is now reversed; but (in vv. 16 f. there is the note of the old prophetic warning) the laws of honesty and justice, good-will and truth must never be neglected.

The above selections give a sufficiently clear view of the prophet. His visions remind us now of Ezekiel, now of Amos, and he passes from them into the world of Jeremiah and 2nd Isaiah. He is sober and modest, direct and ethical; he is not an apocalypticist. But his

imagination is fired, like Haggai's, by the thought of the glory that is to follow the completion of the Temple. Was he disappointed? The fact that in chh. iii and iv (in our text) Zerubbabel is not mentioned, has led some to suppose that he, a priest, set more store by Joshua; this, as we have seen, is not the case; he believed that Zerubbabel, unlike Sheshbazzar, would fulfil the role of Ezekiel's prince; and even if this did not come about, yet Zechariah, like the other members of his 'goodly fellowship', saw materializing in the near future the spiritual glories of the end of the age.

EZRA I-VI

The picture of the state of affairs in Jerusalem in the early years of Darius which is gained from Haggai and Zechariah is very different from the accepted history of the time. This history is founded on the first six chapters of the book of Ezra. There the community in southern Judaea is described as composed of (a) the returned exiles, full of piety and zeal to rebuild the Temple and the city; and (b) the mixed population already on the spot, ignorant and sluggish, like the later 'people of the land'. There is also (c) the semi-idolatrous population of central Palestine, outwardly anxious for union with the exiles, but really animated by the same hatred and jealousy which, later, separated Jews and Samaritans; it was in close touch with the Persian officials; and lastly, there is (d) the Persian element, suspicious of the Jews and easily induced to put an end to their building operations.

Of all this, there is no clear trace in the two prophets. It is true that an attempt has been made to show that the rivalry between central and southern Palestine was in their thoughts. But the interpretation of Hag. ii. 14 in that sense is very doubtful; and Zech. vii. 2 (*they of Bethel*) even if the reading is correct (it should probably be 'Bethel-Sharezer, &c., sent'), by no means implies the action of *the adversaries of Judah and Benjamin* described in Ezra iv. 1 ff. Again, we may deduce the possibility of Persian opposition from some of the language of Zechariah. In the first place, Sheshbazzar the leader of the first band of returning exiles (if indeed he is distinct from Zerubbabel, see p. 163 n.) has disappeared. Did he fall under Persian displeasure as being too anxious to restore an independent state in Palestine? And after the rebuilding of the Temple Zerubbabel drops out of history, and we hear no more of a native prince such as Ezekiel had imagined. It would not be at all strange if, after the glowing language of Zechariah (which, of course, Zerubbabel himself may have deprecated) the Persian officials looked upon him as a dangerous person, and recalled him to Babylon or got rid of him.

But this is not what is implied in Ezra; and while it may be possible to dovetail the two accounts, they do not make a consistent picture, nor can we imagine why each should have so entirely neglected the other. Which then is to be preferred?

Haggai and Zechariah are at least contemporary witnesses; and although they are not historians and do not profess to describe the whole course of the events of their time, they are so close to its central issues that they could hardly leave out of account altogether matters so important to the community as the questions described by Ezra must have been. On the other hand, the book of Ezra has had a long and complicated history of its own. Its date, in its present form, is centuries later than the reign of Darius. (The whole question of the composition of the book, and its relation to Nehemiah and to Chronicles, is discussed below, see p. 195.) Like many other of the historical works of the Old Testament, it is a compilation—a collection of writings or documents, rather than a continuous and critical narrative based on them.

The first six chapters form a distinct section of their own, dealing with the work of Joshua and Zerubbabel, while ch. vii begins the story of Ezra himself, two generations later. These six chapters, however, are not homogeneous. Embedded in them are certain documents, viz. i. 2-4, iv. 11-16, 18-22, v. 7-17, vi. 3-12. Further, the long section from iv. 8 to vi. 18 (like vii. 12-26) is written in Aramaic, which was then becoming the *lingua franca* of the East; it appears to be an historical summary distinct from what precedes and follows. This summary, with the documents or official correspondence which it contains, may be said to bear out the author's general view of the events of the time, as described above; and if the correspondence is genuine (along with the decree of Cyrus, i. 2-4), it is of the utmost importance, and the results of the study of Haggai and Zechariah must be modified accordingly. We shall see, however, that there are distinct difficulties in the way of believing this, and also that the author (or compiler) shows considerable uncertainty in his view of the period, confusing, as it would appear, Cyrus with Darius, and the first Artaxerxes with the second. That the author should have made mistakes does not of course prove that the letters he cites are not genuine; but apart from internal difficulties, it is not at all certain that the author would have had access to the Persian records (cf. Ezra vi. 1); on the other hand, an ancient author would not consider it outside his province to embody in the form of a document, or in a speech delivered by one of his characters, what he considered to be the attitude of the government of the time or of a party.

It is now generally agreed that the picture in Haggai and Zechariah is reliable, and that the change of emphasis in the

book of Ezra, from the sluggishness and moral laxity of the mass of the Jews in Jerusalem, described in the contemporary prophets, to the opposition of the northern neighbours and the Persians as the chief obstacle to the building, is a projection into that earlier age of the jealousies and struggles of the following century. In the third century B. C., when the final compilation of Ezra was taking place, there was but little interest in history as such; the past was recalled in order to throw light on the questions agitating the present, and to the Jews of the fourth and third centuries, the opposition between strict Jew and alien Samaritan was of far more importance than the heroic expectations and the forgotten disappointments preserved in the fragments of the two sixth-century prophets.

Although the first six chapters of Ezra form a unity as regards their subject-matter, the authorship is diverse. The Aramaic account has already been referred to; the date or dates of the other parts of the chapters will be discussed as we come to them; but reasons will be given later on for connecting them with the compiler of Chronicles, and attributing them to the third century. In the Septuagint our canonical book of Ezra is replaced by what is known as '1 Esdras', made up of parts of Ezra, parts of Nehemiah, parts of Chronicles, and certain sections not found elsewhere; and the arrangement is different (see p. 194). The Greek reads like 'a free and idiomatic translation of a Semitic original' (Batten). The section which does not appear in our Bible will be noticed below.

NOTES ON EZRA I-VI

CHAPTER I. The decree of Cyrus; the return of the exiles under Sheshbazzar, with the catalogue of the Temple vessels they took back with them. The decree is dated in the first year of Cyrus; obviously, the first year after his entry into Babylon, in 539. He became king of Persia in 559. The decree which is now quoted is connected with the prophecies of Jeremiah, xxv. 12; xxix. 10. Is the decree genuine? On the Cyrus cylinder the Persian king represents himself as the servant and favourite of Marduk. If he wished to become all things to all his subjects, he might have represented himself to the Jews as a servant of Jahveh and as commanded to build the Temple at Jerusalem (v. 2). And would Cyrus have represented himself as chosen by the gods of all the motley tribes under his rule

whom he wished to carry out his policy of toleration? Haggai and Zechariah certainly do not suggest that any language so definite as this had been used by the Persian king; but we know that Cambyses authorized the building of a Jewish temple in Egypt (see p. 214). The remaining terms of the decree (v. 4) are vague; and it seems best to regard the three verses as a reminiscence, or an epitome, of an actual firman emphasizing, as Daniel emphasizes later, the 'great King's' reverence to Jahveh. Note also the repeated 'Jerusalem which is in Judah'. Another account of a decree of the first year of Cyrus is given in vi. 3-5, which has less to commend it. Would Cyrus be likely to be interested in the topics there set down?

5. *heads of fathers' houses* are chiefs of clans. The last clause of v. 5 implies that not all the exiles were thought of as returning, but the numbers, as given in ii. 64 ff., are very large, 49,897 in all; much larger, it may be thought, than Haggai and Zechariah imply, or than the impoverished land could, at first, support. The exiles also bring great wealth in horses and camels, as well as private property—which all seems to have disappeared in the hard times twenty years later. (Note also ii. 70, *their cities*, implying a fairly complete resettlement of the country.) The leader of this company is Sheshbazzar.¹ Was he identical with Zerubbabel (see p. 160)? In ch. ii. 2 Zerubbabel is mentioned where we should expect Sheshbazzar. Both are said to have laid the foundations of the Temple. If Sheshbazzar began the work, and then, at some time in the next fifteen years, died or was recalled, confusion between the two leaders at a later date would not be strange. 11. It will be noticed that, unless the list in vv. 9, 10 is not intended to be complete, there is a mistake in the total, 5,400 instead of 2,499.

CHAPTER III. After a list of the returning exiles, which also appears in Neh. vii with differences, of the temple officers, and the contributions, all on a large scale, and entirely in the manner of the Chronicler, we pass to the story of the building. But it is probable that in the original narrative, immediately after ch. i, came the passage which is now found only in 1 Esdras (iii-v. 6). The greater part of this passage tells the story of three noble Persian youths, who

¹ Sheshbazzar is a somewhat mysterious figure. The Greek form of his name is Sanabassar. Is he then to be identified with Shenazzar (1 Chron. iii. 18)? He is called the 'prince of Judah' in Ezra i. 8, and 'governor' in v. 14. He is said to have laid the foundations of the Temple in Ezra v. 16. If the identification with 1 Chron. iii. 18 is right, he is the uncle of Zerubbabel.

discussed the relative strength of wine, of the king, of women, and of truth. The third, Zerubbabel, was adjudged by the king to be the best speaker, and by way of reward he is allowed to lead an expedition to Jerusalem. The king is here Darius; later notices in Ezra state that the building was interrupted throughout the reign of Cyrus down to the accession of Darius (iv. 5, 24). But the account in Ezra iii cannot be reconciled with Haggai and Zechariah, who imply that Zerubbabel had returned before the beginning of the reign of Darius (to say nothing of Ezra iv. 3), nor does it fit in with what we know of the troubles at the beginning of Darius' reign, and their effect on the Jews in Judaea. The events of Ezra iii are dated as in the seventh month—possibly after the arrival in Judaea. Work is commenced upon the altar, which therefore would seem not to have been in existence, though that an altar survived the destruction of the city is plain from Jer. xlii-xliv. This is said to be in accordance with *the law of Moses* (v. 2). To what does this refer? Deuteronomy or the Priestly Code? (See p. 59 for a discussion as to the date of the promulgation of the latter. Ezra is always spoken of as bringing the law of Moses from Babylon.) The narrative here regards the full Jewish ritual as now in being. The work has to be hurried because even now local opposition is to be feared. This is in contradiction to ch. iv. 2, and to a notice in one form of the text of the parallel passage in 1 Esdras, that the neighbouring people came with offers of assistance. The existence of considerable capital among the Jews is implied in v. 7. Seven months later (v. 8) the building of the Temple is commenced, under Zerubbabel and Jeshua (Joshua); Haggai and Zechariah do not date this till 520. The foundations are laid, and celebrated with an elaborate musical service *after the order of David* (v. 10). This is the first reference to David, after Amos vi. 5 (which has another kind of music in mind). The hymn used is in the words of Ps. cxxxvi. The old men who had seen the other Temple, however, feel the contrast and join their laments to the songs of joy (cf. Hag. ii. 3). Batten, with the help of Esdras, reconstructs the text so as to refer the building to the sixth month of the second year of Darius, thus bringing it into harmony with Zechariah and Haggai, in which case we must conclude that the compiler placed the building twenty-nine years too early, and altered his authorities accordingly.

CHAPTER IV. This account is followed by a further narrative of a request to be allowed to assist from *the adversaries of Judah and Benjamin*; these (v. 2) are clearly the inhabitants of central Palestine,

who, to judge from Jer. xli. 5, had been accustomed to make their offerings at Jerusalem. The request is refused, though no reason is given; whereupon the *adversaries, the people of the land* (v. 4), set themselves to impede the operations by open opposition and appeal to the Persian authorities, and, till the second year of Darius (v. 24), they are successful.

Ch. iv. also contains the text of a letter said to have been sent by Rehum and Shimshai and the northern Israelites to Artaxerxes, to complain of the building of the wall. The letter is of course out of place here. Work on the walls was not begun till the time of Nehemiah, who came to Jerusalem in the reign of Artaxerxes I (464-424. Cf. Neh. i. 3). The letter is introduced by two verses, the first of which strangely mentions a complaint in the reign of Ahasuerus or Xerxes (485-464), while the second refers to the letter which follows, but assigns it to different authors. The last verse of the chapter (24) takes up v. 5.

Considerations of style suggest that vv. 4, 5 are independent of the preceding request to be allowed to assist. If so, we can understand the difference in the attitude of the opponents under Cyrus or Darius, and under Artaxerxes. They wished to join in the religious worship at Jerusalem as they had done before; but when, later, the Jews showed signs of wishing to become a political power, they were in antagonism at once.

CHAPTERS V-VI. 12. We have here what may be called the Aramaic account of the rebuilding of the temple. Haggai and Zechariah (here the son instead of the grandson of Iddo) give the first impulse, and prince and priest begin to build, prompted also by the *prophets*, the representatives of the older prophetic guilds which had flourished in both north and south Israel (ch. v. 2). Now, however, the Persian governor, Tattenai, intervenes, and requires their authority for building. The Elephantine documents (see p. 223) show that the Persians paid considerable attention to temple services in their large empire. Zerubbabel is evidently in a subordinate position, with hardly as much authority as an Indian native prince. Verse 5 implies, what is said later, that Tattenai was induced to allow the Jews to continue their work while he himself inquired at court to verify their statement of Cyrus' permission to build (v. 13). Sheshbazzar, the governor, he has been informed, had had the captured vessels delivered to him, and he laid the foundations of the Temple, and during the twenty years the work, though not interrupted (v. 16;

contrast iv. 24), had not been completed. Darius accordingly orders a search (ch. vi. 1). The document is found at Ecbatana (*Achmetha*, v. 2) which is of course in Persia, and not (as in v. 1) Babylon; the library or record-office was in the royal residence. This decree is not identical with that in ch. i; it lays down dimensions for the Temple (v. 3) and charges the expenses to the royal treasury (in ch. i voluntary offerings are necessary). It would not be unnatural for the narrator to enlarge the terms of the decree as they were before him. Darius then amplified the permission (v. 6). *Be ye far from thence*; Esdras reads 'keep away from the place'. In v. 7 Esdras inserts the name of Zerubbabel. Darius now assigns revenues for the new cult, which is to invoke the favour of heaven on the Persian royal family; it is noteworthy that he uses the term 'God of heaven' and not the Hebrew name 'Jahveh'. Nor is any one, on pain of the severest penalties (v. 11; cf. Daniel ii. 5, iii. 29), to put difficulties in the way of (better than R.V. *alter*) the decree. Finally, the deity is invoked to defend his own cult. The succeeding verses of the section, 13-18, describe the completion and the dedication of the Temple in pursuance of the decree (v. 14: *Artaxerxes* is a gloss), and in accordance with the law of Moses (v. 18).

In spite of the references to Haggai and Zechariah, this passage can hardly be reconciled with their prophecies. Had the facts been as they are here stated, the prophets' reproofs could easily have been answered; while, on the other hand, the prophets do not mention—in fact, they deny—any such assistance from Darius as is here promised. That the assistance did not reach the Jews is hardly surprising; but if it had been known, it must have been claimed. Thus, not only is a very different view of the early years of Darius presented from that of the two prophets; but this account must have been prepared within, and for the benefit of, a circle of readers who were unfamiliar with those prophetic writings. But, if the two views cannot be reconciled, we have the advantage of knowing what the Jews of a later period thought about their restoration, and what, in view of it, they would be likely to think about the affairs of their own time.

The chapter ends with a short section, reverting to Hebrew (vv. 19-22), which describes the celebration of the Passover and the subsequent feast of unleavened bread by the returned exiles, in careful ceremonial separation (this is always important to the later writer) from the rest of the population. The *king of Assyria* (v. 22), i. e. of Mesopotamia or the East, refers either to Cyrus or Darius.

ISAIAH LVI-LXVI

When we pass from Is. lv to lvi, we are aware of a difference of tone nearly as far-reaching, though not perhaps quite as marked, as the difference to be noticed when we turn from the first thirty-nine chapters to ch. xl. 2-Is., as we have seen, is full of the eager anticipations of deliverance in the last years of the exile. The Jewish community in Babylon is regarded as purged from guilt, marked out for immediate blessing, destined to be the messenger of Jahveh's grace to the ends of the earth, and only needing, at this supreme moment of its history, to be confirmed in its expectations and to be ready to receive the summons that springs from Jahveh's unfaltering fidelity to his ancient promises. Neither conduct nor ritual receive a moment's serious attention.

In the remainder of the book we are dealing with a community of a very different nature and from which very different things are required. There are the old calls to just and righteous conduct which were familiar in the pre-exilic prophets, and a new insistence on ritual observances; there are references to the 'holy mountain' and the Temple which imply that Israel's attitude to the religious centre of the race was of the deepest concern to the prophet; we hear of the righteous who suffer unnoticed, and the ungodly who triumph; there are foreigners in the community whose presence causes great perplexity and who are often though not always spoken of with considerable sympathy; at times we hear of widespread violence and disorder; the pious long for the coming of Jahveh to Zion (not, it will be noticed, the coming of the exiles to Jerusalem); fasting, from pure or impure motives, is a matter which excites much attention; and side by side with the insistence, right or wrong, on the ritual of the Temple, the most degraded forms of pagan idolatry appear to be practised in the land. In ch. lxiv is a sad picture of the desolation of the country and the ruins of the Temple; and the two last chapters both describe the pagan corruption and the coming restoration. We meet with thoughts, and actual passages, which are found in the earlier chapters of the book; but we cannot regard the chapters as connected with 2-Is., since the whole cycle of ideas is different, and there is no suggestion either of Babylon or of the exile. When the key-

words meet us again (as 'salvation' and 'righteousness') their connotation is entirely different. Still less can we connect the section with 1-Is. For the community has no political significance; it is certainly not a monarchy; and there is no reference to the then existing and surrounding nations, nor is there any period either in the reign of Hezekiah or indeed before 586 which offers hints either of the desolation here described, or, so far as we know, of the peculiar type of idolatry. Further, there is no clear reference to the reforms introduced by Nehemiah or Ezra. Hence we seem shut up to the years between 538 and 445. But the Temple is evidently standing, though in a condition far from satisfactory; hence the author cannot be regarded as a contemporary of Haggai and Zechariah; his period would thus appear to be between 516 and 445. Of this period we know very little from any external sources; but the features which we have already noticed, the disorganization, the insistence, often fruitless, on ritual and the Temple services, the desire for the Jews still scattered abroad in other countries to return, and the constant danger of idolatry, are all within the bounds of possibility, and even probability, for those difficult years.

There is, however, another possibility; that the poems in these chapters are not the work of one mind, or even of one period. Several passages appear to point to hostilities between Jews and Samaritans; these (see p. 174) are more likely to have taken place after Nehemiah's resolve to rebuild the walls than before; they may even refer to the events which led up to the schism which, in these pages, is dated at the beginning of the Greek period. It has also been remarked that the acute differences in the community would very appropriately fit the disputes between the Hebraists and the Hellenists which preceded the Maccabean movement. It may be that chh. lvi-lx are later than chh. lxi-lxvi. We shall not attempt to decide these questions; probably they never will be decided. We do not know when the prophetic canon was closed; and although a book of Isaiah appears to have been in existence at the beginning of the second century B.C., we cannot be sure that it contained all the chapters included in the canonical Isaiah later on. If an anonymous prophet or prophets were influenced in language and thought by prophecies already attributed to Isaiah, it would be easy to understand the inclusion of one or more prophecies in a volume which, on any sane interpretation, is a striking and comprehensive anthology of Hebrew predictions of redemption.

NOTES ON ISAIAH LVI-LXVI

CHAPTER LVI. 1-8. Since Jahveh's deliverance is at hand, and his fidelity is about to be manifested, correct and seemly conduct is imperative. (That proximity had been the basis of a different appeal in Babylon.) Weak as man might be (the word for *man* in v. 2 denotes man in his frailty) he would find blessing in loyalty to the sabbath and in general morality. This combination of ritual and morality recalls Deuteronomy and also Ezekiel. The prophet then turns with encouragement to the eunuchs and the foreigners in the community. The eunuchs are not to fear the consequences of their sterility (cf. Deut. xxiii. 1) if they are faithful to the law of the sabbath and obey Jahveh's will and keep the terms of his covenant. This may refer to the law as it was then recognized, perhaps parts of Deuteronomy, or it may be a more general term for Jahveh's revealed will. They will have a memorial pillar in the Temple (R. V. marg. *hand*; monuments exist inscribed with figures of hands), and their reputation will preserve their memory better than could descendants. Foreigners who have attached themselves to the community, if they too are loyal to sabbath and covenant (v. 6), will be accepted and blessed (in spite of e. g. Deut. xxiii. 3 ff.) as if they were Hebrews by birth! The Temple will be a sanctuary in which all nations will offer prayer; for not only the Jews of the Dispersion, but aliens as well will find a place there (v. 8). This spirit of comprehensiveness and hospitality is very noteworthy. It not only contradicts but protests against an attitude of exclusiveness which must have been in existence, echoing Zech. viii. 20 ff. The eunuchs would be most naturally officials who had come from the court of Persia (however antecedently unlikely this might seem); the foreigners, the non-Jewish inhabitants of the northern territories, who as we know made many attempts to be recognized as sharing in the religious privileges of the Judæan worshippers. While the insistence on the sabbath is noteworthy, it must be remembered that both the sabbath and the functions of the sanctuary as a *house of prayer* (v. 7) reflect religious tendencies and experiences which came to the front in the exile; for then, when the Temple services were no more, the sabbath could still be kept, and gatherings for prayer, in what were later known as the synagogues, would preserve the devotional spirit of the people.

CHAPTER LVIII. The encouragement of ch. lvi is followed by a very different passage in ch. lvii, where the *the sons of the sorceress*

are attacked for their contemptuous hostility, their idolatry, and their pandering to some foreign power. When the inevitable reversal of fortune comes, they will look for divine help in vain; while the people of Jahveh, themselves sufficiently punished in the past, will be restored to peace. Ch. lviii strikes yet another note. The recipients of this message are not idolaters; on the contrary, they have been punctilious in their religious duties, more especially in fasting; but they have found no reward. The prophecy of Zechariah (viii. 19 ff.) is still unfulfilled. The reason is, they are told, that they are really fasting for the benefit of their own occupations (not *pleasure* as R. V., v. 3) and the oppression of their labourers (R. V. marg.). This culminates in quarrelling and rancour, which effectually neutralizes their prayers (v. 4). True fasting does not consist in this outward self-humiliation, but in the raising of the proletariat (as we might call them) and in practical beneficence and charity. Such conduct will certainly bring its reward, in personal and continued blessing and prosperity (v. 10 ff.) and in the restoration of the still desolate land. A sort of postscript to the poem, in vv. 13 f., extends or modifies the original thought. The sabbath is to be kept, and not profaned (the feet must be kept from treading on it as if it were a secular place, v. 13) and it must be honoured by setting aside all business that might be done upon it; then the ancient promises to the patriarchs will be performed.

These noble words breathe the spirit of the Sermon on the Mount. The true ritual is brotherly conduct (cf. also Rom. xii. 1, and James i. 27, where 'religion' means 'the practice of religion'). We are reminded of the reforms of Nehemiah (v. 17; xiii. 15 ff.), where the trading class were doing exactly what is represented here (cf. Amos viii. 4, where the merchants wait impatiently till sabbath and new moon are over, that they may continue their dishonest practices). Here the prophet goes further; there is no merit in the keeping of sacred days in itself; every day should be 'the Lord's' and used for His purposes of good-will to the needy. In the postscript, however, we have the later attitude of Nehemiah: sabbath-keeping becomes an end in itself and (though doubtless not without sympathy for the numerous poorer classes) its main requirement is represented as to 'do no business' till it is over (see p. 192).

CHAPTERS LIX-LX. Ch. lix refers to another aspect of the life in post-exilic Palestine which we find in Nehemiah's memoirs: widespread covetousness and dishonesty, with its natural result of per-

plexity and blindness. Jahveh will himself undertake the task of deliverer, and Jews and foreigners alike will be required. Then the champion (*goel*¹, R. V., 'redeemer'—is Nehemiah himself referred to here?) will appear, and the covenant will be fulfilled. The prophet then breaks out (ch. lx) into a glorious prediction of the land as re-peopled, filled with new wealth, and the meeting-place for all nations (this is in the tone of Zech. viii. 18 ff.). It may well be that this chapter is the end of the collection of prophecies, and that chhs. lxi–lxvi should come first.

CHAPTER LXI reads like the entrance of a new voice. These radiant words, which echo the opening words of the Servant Songs, and are repeated by Jesus in his first discourse at Nazareth (Luke iv. 18 f.), picture the state of things found by Nehemiah in Jerusalem, the general disorganization, the helplessness, and the deep sorrow and depression of its inhabitants (vv. 1–3). Such, however, formed the true community, and hence they should be the restorers of the devastated areas. The foreigners who are lording it over them (v. 5) will be their labourers and employees, while they will have leisure and power for the priesthood of the Temple, as exalted as before they had been depressed—'because their shame was in double measure (so the text should probably be emended) and humiliation was their portion' (v. 7); the result will be world-wide fame for the Jews. In the following chapter the author recalls the metaphor of Hosea, where Jahveh is the bridegroom or husband of his land; and he ends with a call to the exiles still in Babylon (lxii. 190 f.) to leave and join the now wealthy community in their own proper home.

CHAPTER LXIII 1–6. A short poem of remarkable dramatic power, but hard to correlate with the preceding or following passages. A watchman in the city sees a solitary warrior approaching the walls, with a gait that tells at once of strength and weariness (*marching* should rather be 'swaying', v. 1). Challenged, he replies with two words, previously joined together, righteousness and salvation. But why his wine-dark or blood-red garments? It is the blood of his foes, whom he has slain, one against all their hosts. For when he saw that there was no ally, he flung himself on them in a kind of berserk

¹ If a Hebrew fell into financial straits, it was the duty of his next-of-kin (*goel*) to come to his assistance, as, in the older code, if a Hebrew was murdered, his *goel* had to act as his avenger. The corresponding verb means 'to act the kinsman's part', and thus to champion, redeem, vindicate. Cf. Ruth iii. 1, Job xix. 27.

rage, and broke them all. Who is this champion? Is he identical with the 'redeemer' of ch. lix. 20? The first verse suggests that the poem is inspired by the old hatred of Edom (cf. notes on Obadiah, p. 100); if so, there is here also a play on names; for *Edom* is a pun on 'red', and *Bozrah* (the capital of Edom) on 'grape-gatherer' (v. 2). Moreover, vv. 3 and 6 suggest that more nations than one are involved, and that these nations are actual oppressors, and not merely jealous neighbours like the Edomites. Although such a pun is by no means impossible, it seems better to emend: 'Who is this that cometh stained red and with garments redder than the vintager?' The passage has been considered to be Messianic; but this can hardly be so, unless we are to apply the name to every passage which portrays a personal deliverer, however fierce and martial his spirit. It is a particularly vigorous expression of the spirit of reaction against the foreigners who were exploiting and enslaving the Jews.

7-18. Completely distinct from the preceding. The author begins with the memory of Jahveh's mercies—perhaps after some particular deliverance. This is expressed in a specially striking way; his people's afflictions were his own; he protected them like a father who feels everything that his child has to bear. This reminds the author (as v. 12 makes clear) of the Exodus, and he then thinks of the ingratitude and disobedience of the nation in the promised land. Hence, Jahveh must punish them. But then, apparently before they can repent, he thinks of his mercy—this, if the present text is right; but more probably the verse (11) should read, 'then he (Israel) remembered the days of old; where is he, &c.'. The deliverance was accomplished for the sake of Jahveh himself (12, last clause; 14, last clause), as in Ezek. xxxvi. 22. Then comes an appeal for the renewal of the old affection (v. 15), for the suppliants speak as if they felt themselves to be alienated from the commonwealth of Israel (v. 16), and they long for the tribes, apparently cast off, to be restored. Verse 18 is corrupt. The appeal is carried on in ch. lxiv, where their hopeless depression is again described, and the Temple is spoken of as a ruin (lxiv. 11).

The passage is a very difficult one. When could the Temple be thus spoken of? Before the time of Zerubbabel, or after some unknown calamity of later times? The earlier part of ch. lxiv. would not be inconsistent with what we know of the period of Haggai and Zechariah, and indeed would form a rather striking commentary on them. Unlike those two prophets, however, the author identifies himself with the weakness and despair of his people, reminding us

rather of Jeremiah in some of his moods of 'vicarious penitence' (Jer. xiv. 19 ff., xvi. 19 f.). But such a mood does not fit in well with lxiii. 7 f.; and what is the reference in lxiii. 16? It has been suggested that we have here an expression of the more pious among the Samaritans, who lament the exclusiveness of the Jews and appeal from it to Jahveh himself. This, however, leaves us with the reference to the burned Temple unexplained. Is it possible that the period is that which immediately follows 538, but expresses the despair of the population in Palestine, in the midst of the still unrelieved devastation, and repulsed and despised by the exiles who are just returning under Sheshbazzar, or who are still in Babylon? We could then understand the allusion to the great mercy of the accession of Cyrus, which seemed to promise another Exodus, but which had left the people as helpless as before.

CHAPTER LXV. Here, we are back in the atmosphere of ch. lvii. Foreigners may find me, Jahveh says, but my own people, to whom I have myself appealed, have turned their back on me. Their abominable cultus and their ridiculous taboos, however, will provoke a speedy punishment. Yet the vintage is not wholly bad (v. 8), as the old song says, 'destroy it not' (the title of the tune to which Pss. lvii, lviii, lix were to be sung; the Hebrew is 'al-tashheth'). The Jews are to inherit the luxuriant plain of Sharon as well as the grim valley of Achor (cf. Hos. ii. 15). 'But as for the renegades that prepare a kind of pagan table of shewbread to their Canaanite god *Fortune* (Gad) and libations to the goddess *Fate*—I will *fate* them to the sword!'

We should be clearer about this passage if we knew more details about the idolatry here referred to. *In gardens* (v. 3) shows that Deuteronomy is now quite forgotten; and *bricks*, as material for an altar, were entirely contrary to Hebrew custom. The reference to pigs (v. 4: cf. lxvi. 17) may point to rites introduced during the Greek period. In any case, we have clear evidence of the existence and influence of the lax party in the country—the party which opposed Nehemiah and Ezra, and for which they had so little mercy.

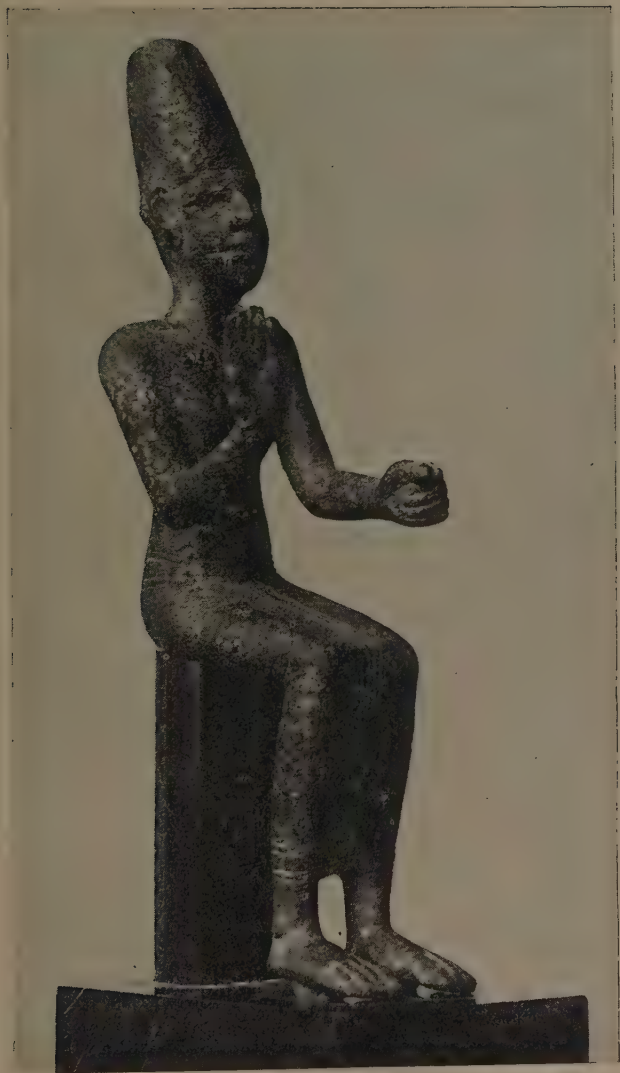
CHAPTER LXVI. The chapter begins with a protest against the building of some temple; useless, because the whole world belongs to Jahveh. But the protest is really urged against an attitude of mind, in contrast to the humility and reverence which Jahveh approves. Without this, legitimate sacrifice is as sinful as forbidden rites and idolatry itself (v. 3), when it rises from wanton contempt for Jahveh's

will (v. 4). The prophet now turns to the true worshippers. They have apparently been expelled in a high-handed manner by their rivals; but there is a sudden sound of thunder in Jerusalem, and the foes are punished. Then, with marvellous rapidity, the population increases, as if birth could take place before travail had begun (vv. 7-9). The poem then passes into a song of joyful triumph in Jerusalem, the teeming mother of an abounding family, for whom the Gentiles are to act as nurses (v. 12). For their foes will be destroyed by Jahveh, with an army clothed with heavenly terrors. All who practise pagan rites will perish. Then the Gentiles will themselves be brought to see the destructive might of Jahveh (v. 18), and the fugitives will spread the fame of this judgement among the more distant countries; as a result, the Jews of the Dispersion will be brought back to Jerusalem with honour, like an offering brought to the sanctuary; they will be installed as ministers in the Temple; and a new universe will be created in which their descendants will dwell for ever (v. 22).¹

Verses 1 and 3 by themselves suggest that we have here the older prophetic polemic against all ritual; but vv. 2 and 4 make it clear that the prophet is attacking some special body of temple-builders; this attack is carried on in vv. 5 ff. Between it and Jerusalem there is the bitterest hostility, and its worship is marked by atrocious rites; but with its destruction will come a new attitude in foreign nations to the Jews, and the holy city, re-peopled from the Dispersion, will discharge its true functions as a great ecclesiastical community. To what does all this point? The most natural explanation would refer us to the building of the schismatic temple, after the time of Ezra, in Samaria, whose worship, legitimate as it might seem outwardly, was held to be no better than rank paganism. The Samaritans, whatever else they were, were not pagans (see p. 235). Then what of the paganism of v. 17? This verse does not necessarily refer to v. 3; rather, the whole passage (from v. 10 on) has in mind the foreign nations in general, who, pagans as they are, will be united, but only as subordinates and slaves, to the nation of priests.

It may be that attempts at temple-building, of which we know nothing, had been made before the great schism. But it is safer to connect this chapter with the schism, whenever that is to be dated (see p. 232): the prophet looks ahead from the city, weak and desolate through the disruption, to an abundance of inhabitants, and an unending supremacy and peace. The proper names in v. 19 suggest a

¹ Verses 23, 24 are a later addition, recalling Ezek. xxxix.



A PHOENICIAN GOD (from Djezzin, Lebanon)
The type would be familiar in North Palestine

daringly wide outlook ; Spain (Tartessus), Asia Minor (Lydia), the North (Meshech, for *that draw*), Greece (Javan), and still more distant lands. This of itself suggests a later rather than an earlier age. Verse 21, placing priests and Levites together, as they are placed together in the Deuteronomic Code, is held to point to a time when Deuteronomy had not yet been replaced by the Priestly Code, i. e. before Ezra ; but this is far from being certain ; and if the above interpretation is correct, we have a picture of the hopes of the Jews at a time when the great series of Old Testament prophecies is coming to an end.

Looking back, then, over these eleven chapters we have a collection of poems which reflect the various expectations and ideals and fears of a whole age. More particularly, they show us in what different fashions a real and sincere religious feeling found expression in the age before Nehemiah. We can see also the emergence of the two parties, the stricter and the more lax ; the dogged refusal to surrender hope born in times less bewildering if not less dark ; the steadily increasing stress on the ritual of the Temple, and the thought of the Gentiles as destined, not to be saved or evangelized or redeemed by the Jews, but to become their servants and their clients. The passion of the earlier prophets has not died down ; but the fanaticism of later Judaism is already rising.

Note.—Many scholars have regarded these chapters (Trito-Isaiah) as the work of a single author (notably Duhm and Marti, and apparently Whitehouse) ; but an unprejudiced study seems to point to several authors with independent attitudes, hopes, and fears, connected as they may be both in sympathy and in time.

MALACHI

The short book of Malachi closes the Hebrew canon of the Prophets, but its date must be gathered from internal evidence, as in the case of the other books. The word means simply 'my messenger', and the Greek translation renders the first verse of ch. i by 'in the hand of his messenger'. Beside much that reminds us of the older prophetic style, 'Malachi' often uses a quasi-dialogue form of expostulation and reply. His hearers question some word of Jahveh, and the prophet defends and expands it. The book falls into three fairly well-marked sections, i. 6-14, ii. 1-9, against the priests; i. 2-5, ii. 10-16, iii. 7-12, against the people; and ii. 17-iii. 6, iii. 13-iv. 3, encouragement. iv. 4-6 are an appendix, a prophecy which appears to amplify iii. 1.

It is not difficult to gain a general idea of the date. Like the bulk of 3-Is., it is subsequent to the building of the Temple, i. e. to 516; and there is no hint of the measures taken by Nehemiah after 445. But the picture is not identical with that of 3-Is. There are no references to idolatry, or to the existence of two parties, oppressors and oppressed. There is a general laxity in paying Temple offerings and tithes, encouraged, it would seem, by carelessness in the priests themselves; and there is much immorality and exploitation of the poor by the rich. Malachi also protests against the ease and frequency of divorce; a fact which is interesting in view of the campaign of Nehemiah for the divorce of all non-Hebrew wives. The references to the law seem to imply a knowledge of Deuteronomy rather than of the Priestly Code, which indeed is borne out by the combined interest in ritual and conduct. Adultery and dishonesty and corruption will certainly be punished; but if the tithes are paid punctually, the wished-for prosperity may be confidently expected. The mention of the Gentiles (i. 11; see below) shows a noticeably different attitude from that of most of 3-Is.; and it is tempting to suggest that the stress laid upon the coming messenger (iii. 1, iv. 4) may point to reflections or hopes connected with the mission of Nehemiah. Putting Malachi beside 3-Is., we can see how different currents of thought and tides of passion ebbed and flowed in Palestine in the first half of the fifth century, and how complicated was the situation in which Nehemiah found himself on his arrival in Jerusalem. Though positive statements are impossible, there

is nothing in Malachi to disprove the view that the book represents on the whole the position of the stricter Jews in Palestine about 450 B.C.

NOTES ON MALACHI

CHAPTER I. 6-14. After a few words of encouragement against the Edomites, constantly encroaching on the under-populated territory of southern Judaea, the prophet turns upon the priests. They have neither honour nor fear for Jahveh, as is shown by their neglect of the Torah or rubric for sacrifices. They would not dare to treat the Persian governor in that manner (v. 8; the same title appears in Neh. v. 15). This is to bring the altar (or *table*, anything on which food may be placed) into disrepute (v. 7). Ask, then, for Jahveh's favour, he proceeds in irony; will he listen to any of you? Better bring such worship to an end altogether (v. 10). *Offering* here is the term used either for the vegetable accompaniments of animal sacrifices, or, more generally, for a present made to a superior. The very Gentiles treat Jahveh with far more respect (v. 11). Was the prophet here thinking, it has been asked, of the Persians, or of the Jews dispersed *among the Gentiles*? The mention of offerings and incense makes the second unlikely; but would Malachi have been likely to know much about the Persian religion? Perhaps the question is rhetorical; but it shows the dawn of a universalism which is found in Pss. lxxv. 2, 5, cxlv. 18, Jonah i. 16, and in the early Christian church in Acts x. 34 f. But with you priests, he continues, the altar is treated with disrespect (*say* constantly means 'think', or 'believe', or even 'act as if'). You parade openly your contempt for the sacred rites. You allow animals in a condition expressly forbidden (v. 13; cf. Lev. xxii. 20 f.) to be laid on the altar, while the worshippers break their vows and palm off on Jahveh inferior offerings, adored as he is by foreign nations (v. 14; cf. Deut. xxiii. 21). This last verse is probably an addition, as it refers to the people and not to the priests. We should indeed have expected that the people would have been condemned for this laxity, and not the priests. The priests would have been likely to protest against it themselves. Evidently they did not. Possibly they feared to press hardly on the people, and found that by acquiescing in inferior offerings, they gained in quantity what they lost in quality. It would seem that all through the post-exilic age down to the time of the Maccabees, there was more zeal for the real enforcement of the law among the laymen than among the priests.

CHAPTERS II. 17-III. 12. Malachi here starts from the old problem of the apparent injustice of God. The good are left in trouble, the wicked find prosperity. When good and evil are regarded as coming from God, it is natural to think of the prosperous man as being rewarded, whatever he has done. Then does He reward the wicked? 'Jahveh's ways are not equal.' 'The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge.' The question was discussed by Ezekiel's contemporaries. Ezekiel stoutly denied the contention (see above, p. 77). The evil-doer alone was punished. The question rose again as naturally in Palestine in the fifth century. Malachi's answer is different. Jahveh will himself appear, preceded, and, as it would seem (iii. 1), followed by his messenger. (It will be remembered that the problem of Job seems to be solved, so far as it is solved at all, by a theophany.) But he will come to purge the community, and especially the priests, as by fire, so that the Temple offerings and services may be acceptable and regain their ancient glories; while all the immoral and corrupt elements therein will be condemned. Jahveh does not change, now to reward the good and now the evil, and it is because of this that the nation still survives (v. 6). The same question occurs in v. 14 ff. There the prophet suggests that the righteous who suffer are not to be forgotten, and will at the last be vindicated. Next the question of the tithe and the offering is taken up. Here the people and not the priests are evidently in mind. 'You have always been disobedient', says the prophet. Amos and Hosea, Jeremiah and Ezekiel had said the same. But Malachi seems to be referring to rites, not, as his predecessors, to conduct. The nation has robbed Jahveh by withholding part of the tithes. Tithes are part of the Deuteronomic legislation (Deut. xiv. 22-29, xxvi. 12-15). There the tithes are consumed at a religious festival, or given, especially in the third year, in charity to the needy. Here, it seems, the annual tithe is given for the priestly revenues. It is to be brought into a special repository (cf. Zech. xi. 13, Neh. x. 39, xiii. 4 f., the magazine handed over to Tobiah); and it will then bring fertility—apparently in the next season, and enemies and plunderers (the *devourer*, v. 11) will be restrained, and Palestine will become the envy of the surrounding nations. The thought is as naïve as that of Haggai i. 6 ff.; but the problem of providing for a large number of non-producers in those hard days must have been acute; and the prophets were at least certain that for the distribution of a man's income, he was responsible to God—a truth often overlooked in later times.

NEHEMIAH

The poems which we have just been considering, obscure as is their origin, give us a fairly clear and definite picture of the state of society in Jerusalem in the first half of the fifth century. Now, however, we approach a series of difficult problems; the order of the visits of Nehemiah and Ezra to Jerusalem; the relation of these two men, as reformers, to one another; the date of the promulgation of the Priestly Code; and the occasion and date of the Samaritan schism. None of the questions can be solved apart from the rest; for none of them except the last is there any but biblical authority; and in each case the different biblical notices seem at variance with one another.

For information, we naturally turn to the books of Ezra and Nehemiah. These two books, as they appear in our English Bibles, are really parts of one and the same book; this, again, is continuous with Chronicles, and from the same hand (see p. 195). We have already seen, however, that the book of Ezra is composite and that its statements cannot be received without caution. The whole work, however, includes a section which stands out from the rest in its use of the first person, the vividness of its style, and the general 'matter-of-factness' of its contents. This section is composed of what may be called the memoirs of Nehemiah¹ (i-vii. 5a, omitting ch. iii, xiii. 3-31, with traces in ch. xii. 27-43).

The exact relation of these to the larger work, and the fashion in which they came to be incorporated in it, we shall discuss later; here we may notice that in these chapters we have a piece of contemporary evidence which is of the highest value. Like the incident of Amos and Amaziah at Bethel (Amos vii), the court stories of the reign of David in 2 Sam., or to take a larger and far more important example, like the narratives in the Synoptic Gospels, they could not have been invented; that is, the literary and historical skill necessary for the invention of such incidents and such a character simply cannot be conceived as having existed in that age. Again, autobiography of any kind is rare in ancient literature; and this autobiography

¹ Some of these memoirs have been regarded as later additions; Batten (I.C.C.) would omit i. 5-11a, iii, and xiii. 3-5; Torrey would omit everything after vi. 19; needlessly, as the present writer is inclined to believe.

is so naïve and unaffected, so concise yet so outspoken, that we can have no fear that the author is giving us a fancy portrait of himself. He is pious yet autocratic, simple yet shrewd, self-confident yet complacent; the sort of man who knows how to deal with other men, who can persuade and command, who knows when to be firm, and when to plead; but who, as the phrase goes, 'will stand no nonsense'. In many ways, indeed, he reminds us English readers of our own Cromwell; and although the circumstances of his time seem entirely different, his problem was by no means completely distinct from that of the Protector. Both men lived at a time when traditional authority had ceased to function, when religion and politics were closely intertwined, and when many men who should have known better were trying to 'fish in troubled waters'; and both men had before them the task of building up at once a state and a church. And if it could not be said of Cromwell, doughty combatant as he was, that he ever cursed his enemies, 'and smote certain of them and plucked off their hair' (Neh. xiii. 25), yet he might have used the very words of Nehemiah (v. 7) 'I consulted with myself, and contended with the nobles and the rulers'. And the traditional advice of Cromwell, to trust in God and keep the powder dry, is exactly echoed in Nehemiah's words, 'we made our prayer unto our God and set a watch against them day and night' (iv. 9). Nehemiah, thus portrayed by himself, is one of the most attractive of the many striking characters of the Old Testament. Equally important is the light that these memoirs cast on the state of things in Jerusalem. We pass from deductions from writings of what is at best an uncertain date, to the record of actual facts, dated and set down in order. The series of events begins in the twentieth year of the reign of Artaxerxes, i. e. 445 B.C.¹ In that year, Nehemiah, a Jew, who enjoyed considerable favour at the royal court at Susa, arrived in Jerusalem on a mission of help and reconstruction. He found the inhabitants in great distress; the city had indeed its Temple, but there were no walls, and in consequence the community living on the site of the ancient capital of the country was open to every hostile or dangerous influence, and could hope for neither prestige nor safety. He brought with him a commission to build a fort close to the

¹ See Chronological Table. Artaxerxes I (Longimanus) began his reign in 464; Artaxerxes II (Mnemon) came to the throne in 404; it is just possible that he is the king referred to; but the suggestion is very unlikely. It is quite possible, however, that the second Artaxerxes is the Artaxerxes of Ezra (see p. 198).

Temple, the walls of the city, and also a residence for himself as pasha or governor.

In spite of his official position, however, he was far from feeling sure of his ground at first; he persuaded rather than commanded the people to start operations—combining, as it would seem, the rôle of Haggai and Zechariah with that of Zerubbabel and Joshua—and the difficulty of their reluctance was no sooner overcome than another appeared. The neighbouring communities in central Palestine had been quite willing to see the Temple restored, and had offered as in earlier times to bring their own gifts there; but to attempt to recreate a political community was a different matter; and Nehemiah found himself opposed by a coalition which first ridiculed, then intrigued, and then threatened actual force. Nehemiah was further hampered by disunion within his own community; not only was there a party which quite openly favoured the 'uitlanders'; but the deep-seated evils of social and industrial oppression had gone far to break the patriotism of the wealthier classes and the spirit of the poor. Nehemiah's action was prompt and daring. Apparently with no more military force under his command than a small body-guard, and no actual support from Persia, he first took the measure that was already known in republican Rome as '*novae tabulae*'—releasing of mortgagees and cancelling of debts; he then armed the populace, and cleverly organized them so that while the building operations were going on, they could repel any sudden armed attack; at the same time he ordered his own household and his conduct as governor so as to be known as an '*ami du peuple*'.

Sanballat, the leader of the foreigners, aided by his friends within the city (who were not without prophets to assist them), made five separate attempts (in the last of which they were reduced to sheer bluff) to turn Nehemiah from his projects; but the wall was at last completed. Even then the intrigues were not at an end, and the suspicions of the Persians were stirred up; but Nehemiah refused to modify his simple policy of taking no risks but surrendering no single point, and the walls were dedicated in triumph. The governor, either at once or after an interval, returned to Babylon. In twelve years he was back again in Jerusalem, to find a crying need of further reforms. The foreigners were once more in positions of high influence; the incomes of the Temple and the priests were disorganized; the law of the sabbath was neglected; and, still worse, intermarriages with foreign women had taken place on

a large scale, and the purity of the whole race was threatened. Men of priestly birth seem to have been among the worst offenders. Again, the governor took prompt measures, although he still relied on his personal more than on his official influence; with his vigorous 'purge' his narrative comes to a premature end.

The community with which he is dealing is easily recognizable as the community we have already studied. But we can see how his coming cleared up issues which had been previously confused. His aims may be summed up under the following heads:—political independence, social isolation, racial purity, and fidelity to the ecclesiastical law; the whole carried out in that spirit of good-will and opposition to anything that could cause a class war, which was in accordance with the best traditions of earlier ages. We cannot be sure that he achieved all these; his own narrative shows how deeply rooted was the opposition to be overcome. But these four points, as the ideal of the stricter Jews, have survived the catastrophe of the subsequent destruction of Jerusalem and all the disasters that have befallen the race. Nehemiah was the first militant champion of Judaism.

There is, however, one great difficulty which is involved in his narrative. The book of Ezra implies that at some time previously to the arrival of Nehemiah, Ezra the scribe had arrived from Babylon with a large body of followers from the exiles there; that he brought with him a new code of law, which he tried in vain, at first, to persuade the people to accept; but that later, and (as it would seem) with the help of Nehemiah, he was successful. Nehemiah, like Haggai and Zechariah, nowhere refers to a body of returned exiles, nor does he mention, or even imply the presence of, any one corresponding to Ezra. He is even silent as to any promulgation of a code of law. Now, it might be said that Nehemiah, writing his personal memoirs, and being a man of action and not a priest, had no concern to mention one whose outlook would be so different from his own, and of whose position he might be unappreciative and even a little jealous. This, however, cannot be maintained; for while we can see how Nehemiah's narrative fits in to the Jerusalem of Malachi and 3-Is. it does not fit into a Jerusalem in which such a company as Ezra is said to have brought with him was present and, even if for the time discredited, still influential. With his self-revealing fashion of writing, he might have rejoiced that they were there to help, or complained that they would not give him the help he needed; the one thing he could not do was to ignore them.

Curiously enough, too, the narrative of Ezra never mentions Nehemiah. If the two are to be put together, it is plain that each will have to be re-written. The problem raised by Ezra is discussed below (see p. 194); in dealing with Nehemiah we have treated him as a first-hand authority, and events which he must have known and mentioned had they occurred, but which he neglects, we have left out of account. One other point, however, the reader must bear in mind. Nehemiah refers to the law, but not (in the manner of Ezra) to its promulgation as something new. What then was the law which Nehemiah set himself to enforce? The natural answer is that it was the only law known to have been already regarded as authoritative, Deuteronomy—supplemented, perhaps, by the Holiness Code (Lev. xvii-xxvi, see p. 55). But Nehemiah never appealed to documents or written statutes; his tone is rather that of one who is maintaining a glorious but unwritten constitution (an idea not unfamiliar to English readers), and the narrative of the reading of an authoritative legal document (Neh. viii) of which Nehemiah appears to know nothing (see notes *ad loc.*) implies that in Nehemiah's time, and doubtless before, however carefully the letter might be preserved in certain priestly circles, the spirit was of more importance for the community as a whole.

NOTES ON NEHEMIAH

CHAPTERS I. 1-4 b, II. The author is a court official in attendance on the Persian king at his winter residence in Susa (cf. v. 11). In the month Chislev (November-December) of the twentieth year (of Artaxerxes, though ii. 1 'in Nisan, the first month, of the twentieth year' implies that this must have been the nineteenth year) Nehemiah meets a relative of his own with some companions who had recently arrived from Jerusalem. Apparently he has known little about the city or its population, since when he hears the news, he is overwhelmed (v. 4). The prayer which follows is probably not Nehemiah's; it is full of the phrases and thought of the Chronicler (see below, p. 195) and is in contrast with Nehemiah's own very terse comments and prayers (cf. xiii. 22, 31). The narrative is resumed at the end of v. 11. Nehemiah had to wait three months till his turn to serve at the palace came round. It is interesting to note the fullness with which the account of the royal interview is given; it would naturally dwell in the author's memory (note the detail in v. 6, and the curious omission of the length of the period of absence which he mentioned

to the king; perhaps, as would be natural, it was mentioned but vaguely). He is then provided with the passports which would be required by the Persian satraps in the course of his journey, and an order for wood for building (note the Hebrew name of the commissioner of forests, v. 8; is the passage a later addition, reminiscent of the services of Hiram?). He has a small military force with him, but mentions no incidents on the roads (contr. Ezra viii. 21 ff.), nor does he explain his own official position, nor the character of the government already existing in the city. We may assume that there were some subordinate Persian functionaries who would give way when the royal cup-bearer arrived on the scene. But Nehemiah shows great circumspection (cf. 'by night', v. 13), and the only persons towards whom he acts with a high hand, till much later, are the foreigners.

He soon learns that there will be opposition (which there would hardly have been if the royal commission had been in the least explicit). Sanballat, the leader, comes from Beth-horon, north of the territory of Judah; he, or another Sanballat, is found as governor of Samaria in the Aswan papyri at the end of the century. The name is Babylonian. His ally is Tobiah, another 'foreigner' from Ammon. *The servant* (slave) is contemptuous; slaves could often rise to positions of importance. A third ally (v. 19) was Gashmu, apparently, unlike the others, not of an allied stock, but an Arabian. Nehemiah in his night journey of inspection seems to have started at the west of the city (v. 13), to have passed along the foot of the Tyropoeon valley and by the pool of Siloam, and then to have returned. Thus learning what has to be done, he summons the four classes of the population, the priests, the upper classes of the laity, the officials, and the common people (v. 16). It is on the last-named that he comes specially to rely. He tells them of the two new factors in the situation, the manifest favour of God, and the authorization of the court (we can recall the arguments of Haggai), with its consent to commence operations (v. 18). At once the opposition is revealed. First they ridicule; then they accuse of rebellion. Nehemiah boldly tells them that heaven is on his side; did he add a mention of the royal firman? Then he lays down his cardinal principle, that Jews and non-Jews must be for ever distinct (cf. Ezek. xlv. 7).

CHAPTER IV. After a long list of those who took part in the completed building (ch. iii), which has been added to the memoirs, we continue the narrative of Nehemiah. At once we hear more of the opposition from the North. Verses 1-3 seem to imply that a large

crowd of Samaritans came to Jerusalem and laughed at the Jews, efforts—the *army* (v. 2) was evidently not for the moment prepared to fight. To Sanballat's scornful words (one thinks of the Rabshakeh in front of the walls in 701) Tobiah added the traditional jest of Remus when the walls of Rome were being built. Nehemiah was stung, and records a brief prayer as fierce as those of Jeremiah; but the work was not stopped by ridicule, and soon the gaps were all filled up and the wall had reached half its intended height (v. 6). The three leaders then assembled their forces and prepared an armed and sudden attack. At the same moment the builders (*Judah*, v. 10) professed themselves unable to proceed (unless the text hinted by the LXX is correct, i.e. that the builders complained of the number of the enemy); and the Jews living in Samaria added further alarmist reports (such appears to be the meaning of the obscure v. 12). In this crisis, Nehemiah, not content with an armed guard (v. 9), equipped the whole company, and with a few simple, vigorous, and quite conventional words of encouragement, rallied the spirits of the Jews. The centre of the military defence would seem to have been Nehemiah's Persians (v. 16), but everything implies caution and speed; arrangements were made for concentration at any point; a force of Samaritans might be concealed at any spot outside the walls, and the work was carried on as long as light permitted (cf. also v. 23).

CHAPTER V. The narrative of the walls is now broken by an account of economic troubles in the city, and Nehemiah's measures for their relief. From the absence of any reference to the building (except v. 16), the difficulty of supposing that the discussions could have taken place while the work was proceeding at top speed, and the reference to the year 432 in v. 14, probably we must suppose that while the difficulties had appeared during the work, they were remedied at its close. During the work, the upper classes (the *nobles*, iv. 14, or the *Jews*, v. 1) had played their part with the rest; now, the differences between patricians and plebeians become manifest. The population is felt to be too great for the impoverished country; the small land-holders, in the late hard times, had mortgaged their farms for tribute, and had even been sold up and their families reduced to slavery as security for their debts (cf. Is. v. 8). It was the old protest of the pre-exilic prophets; and Nehemiah, with his warm and sympathetic nature, knew that such dissensions would be fatal in the end to the safety of the community. Hebrew slavery was an ancient institution. The Book of the Covenant (Ex. xxi. 2) laid down



PERSIAN SOLDIER

One of Darius's body-guard from the 'frieze of the Immortals' in the palace at Susa : enamelled bricks.

the principle that the slaves were to be released after seven years. But that law is not appealed to here, any more than in the abortive suggestion to release the slaves during the siege of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar (Jer. xxxiv). Nehemiah then takes up their case himself, and attacks the wealthy classes and the officials (then, as usual, siding with them), and accuses them of taking interest (*usury*, R. V.; all interest was forbidden in dealing with Hebrews, though not with foreigners, Ex. xxii. 25, Deut. xxiii. 20, Lev. xxv. 35); this charge had not been mentioned previously. Worse than that; he had himself bought and liberated Hebrews who had been in slavery to foreigners, and in some cases these men had been sold to their masters by their fellow-Jews (v. 8; for *held a great assembly* in v. 7 read 'uttered a great curse', with the change of one letter). Nehemiah also confesses that he has himself taken interest; and then (although the text is not very clear) he asks, and they agree, that interest should cease, and that the confiscated property should be restored; it was, in fact, equivalent to the 'year of release' described in Lev. xxv. Solemnity was added to the occasion by the oath administered to the priests, and the symbolical act of Nehemiah himself (v. 13; apparently he shakes his outer garment from him). Nehemiah now adds a note describing his generous conduct through the twelve years of his governorship (v. 14) and the contrast between his régime and that of his (Jewish?) predecessors. He contributed to the expense of the public works; he refused to acquire property; he employed his own household in the rebuilding; he entertained 150 poor Jews at his own table (*rulers* must be wrong, v. 17) besides a number of those who returned from the surrounding countries to which they had withdrawn (cf. iv. 12); and he refused also to draw his own official income (v. 18). We may smile at the recital of these virtues; but they were almost unheard-of in the ancient world (cf. 1 Kings iv. 7).

CHAPTERS VI-VII. 5 a. Resumption of the narrative of the rebuilding. Sanballat and his friends now give up the plan of force, and try to lure Nehemiah into their power. The walls were now joined up, and though the gates were still open, they were too well guarded to allow an enemy to enter them (vi. 1). But Sanballat and the rest are still on good terms with the leading Jews in the city, though when they hint at the sending of information to the Persian court that Nehemiah, supported by certain prophets, was planning to seize the crown of Judaea, he can afford to laugh at the trick. He is known at court too well.

The prophets, too, were on the other side (though men may well have spoken of Nehemiah as Zechariah spoke of Zerubbabel). One of them, Shemaiah, secured a private interview with the governor (*shut up*, v. 10, is obscure; he was able to get into the Temple), told him that an attempt would be made that night (so, apparently, v. 10) to assassinate him, and begged that they might together take refuge in the inner shrine. (It would seem that Shemaiah represented that his own life was in danger also.) As he listened, Nehemiah saw through the trick (v. 12); he was an emissary of the enemy, who hoped thus to humiliate the governor in the eyes of his people. If the text of v. 15 is right, the building was complete within two months, and less than six months after Nehemiah had left Susa. No wonder that the neighbours of the Jews were impressed (v. 16). Sanballat now appears to have given up the game as lost; but Tobiah keeps up a vigorous correspondence with the leading Jews (v. 17) which he could do the more easily as he (like Sanballat himself, ch. xiii. 28) was connected with them by marriage. The danger is not yet over, as will be seen later; but instead of merely keeping the enemy outside the half-built walls, Nehemiah, like another Protector, has now to select trustworthy military officers to be in charge of the citadel and the general safety of the city. These are found in the governor's own brother, and a man of deep religious character named Hananiah. The gates are only to be opened after sunrise and before sunset (this seems to lie behind the text of *while they stand*, vii. 3); in this way Nehemiah hoped to attract the populace to live inside the walls, instead of in their scattered homes outside (v. 4). To this end, he calls a general assembly . . . Here the memoirs break off, and the compiler has inserted a long genealogical list. We resume at

CHAPTER XIII. 4-31. (Verses 1-3 may be from Nehemiah, but they read like the comment of a later writer—note the third person plural in v. 3.) After twelve years Nehemiah's leave of absence from the court expired (6, cf. ch. v. 14). Tobiah (ch. iv. 7) actually obtained from Eliashib the high-priest the use of an important chamber in the Temple itself; *allied* (v. 4), perhaps by friendship; Eliashib was connected by marriage with Sanballat (v. 28; Tobiah had other connexions, ch. vi. 18). After some unspecified time, but evidently in the autumn (v. 15), Nehemiah asked leave of absence again (v. 6), and finding this arrangement with Tobiah, cancelled it, and restored the chamber to its original use. Next he discovered that the Temple dues and tithes had not been paid—an old fault (ch. v. 10 ff.). The law of tithes

is stated in various forms in Deut. xii. 17-19; xiv. 22-8; xxvi. 12 ff.; contr. Lev. xxvii. 30 ff.; Num. xviii. 21-8. Here (though contrast Neh. x. 38) Nehemiah agrees with Deuteronomy against the later law. The governor then turned his attention to the sabbath, which was being profaned by home industry and by markets for both home and foreign produce. Tracing their previous ills to sabbath profanation (pre-exilic prophets had not done this), he took vigorous measures to secure sabbath observance, prohibiting the holding of markets outside the walls, and so preventing the Jews from either buying or selling.¹ Lastly he approached the most delicate question of all, marriages with foreign women. The question was hardly one of what we should call racial intermarriage, since the population of Ammon and Moab and even Ashdod (v. 23) would outwardly differ very little from that of Jerusalem. But language, customs, and religion were all different, and, with the hospitality to external influences which was always characteristic of the Hebrews, the Jewish community, after all its struggles, was once more in danger of being assimilated to its neighbours. In the hot feelings that lay behind Nehemiah's violent outbreak (v. 25) we can see the birth of that attitude to Gentiles which separates post-exilic Jew from pre-exilic Hebrew; and Nehemiah had to set himself to create the very spirit of nationalism which is a menace and a tragedy in so many countries of the world to-day. The grandson of Eliashib had actually married the daughter of Sanballat, and he was accordingly banished. The language of the whole paragraph is passionate but vague; the offenders (? the whole community) promised that they would not repeat the offence, and with a further reference to the purification of the priesthood (the question of their marriages would be specially important) and some of the duties of the priests and Levites (cf. v. 11), the memoirs rather abruptly come to an end.

It would appear that Nehemiah's second visit took place after a considerable interval. Time would be needed for all these abuses to grow up. There is also a certain irascibility both in the governor's acts and the tone in which he describes them, that suggests the older man; the high-priest also is now old enough to have a grandson who is already married. But, however this may be, we can see that in both sections of his memoirs, Nehemiah is penetrated by the thought of the danger of foreign influence. In his account of the building of

¹ The fish (pickled or salted) brought by the Phoenician traders is specially mentioned (v. 16); then, as later, a staple food of the poorer sections of the population (cf. Deut. xiv. 9).

the walls, he gives the larger part of his space to the intrigues of Sanballat and his friends; and behind all the reforms of ch. xiii is the determination that Israel shall dwell apart. But, though his spirit may have become embittered, we prefer to think of him as the resolute, canny, pious, kindly soldier and administrator; a figure that is familiar to us in numbers of English portraits. Perhaps, if more of the Hebrew men of genius had been described by other pens than those of the later historians, with their somewhat confined and narrow interests, the famous men whom Ecclesiasticus bids us praise might have appealed more to our English tempers.

A few words must be added on the interesting passage in Neh. x. 28-39. As it stands, it seems to follow the celebration of the promulgation of the law in Ezra's time (see p. 207). But the detailed provisions here mentioned come strangely after what is intended to be thought of as the complete law; and the provisions themselves are in considerable conflict with those of P. On the other hand, they are often Deuteronomic; and if, as the argument has led us to suppose (see also p. 29), Nehemiah's reforms preceded the promulgation of P by at least a generation, the law which he enforced so vigorously must have been Deuteronomic, if not our Deuteronomy itself. Further, these provisions and our knowledge of Nehemiah's actual ordinances often imply one another. We miss indeed in these verses the genial but autocratic first person singular of the great governor; but is it fanciful to see in them an account, by a strong partisan of his, of a solemn and mutual pledge and agreement which followed on the drastic measures of ch. xiii?

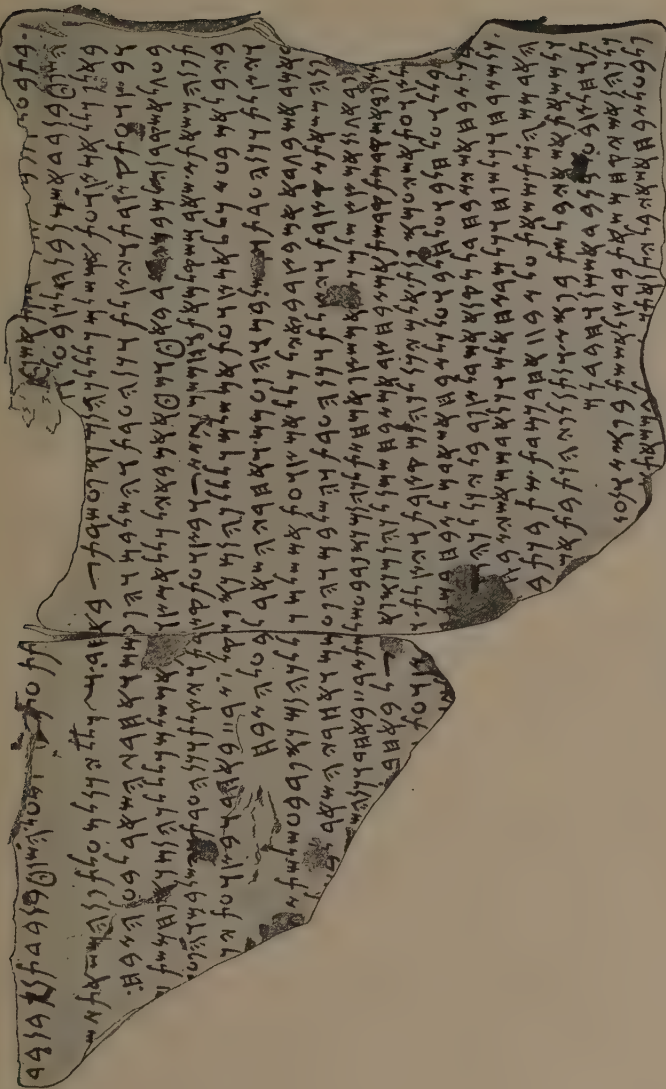
The *covenant* begins, quite naturally, with a condemnation of all intermarriage (v. 30; cf. xiii. 23 ff.). The sabbath is to be kept (v. 31; cf. xiii. 15 ff.), and also the seventh or sabbatical year (a combination of Exod. xxiii. 10, 11 (the Book of the Covenant) and Deut. xvi. ff.). The composition Temple-tax of a third of a shekel is peculiar to Nehemiah; the amount levied in P is the well-known half-shekel (Exod. xxx. 11-16; but the payment of that sum is not, as here, annual). This tax is not referred to as in an already existing ordinance. The wood-offering was of great importance (v. 34), since in Palestine even then wood was scarce, and the needs of the altar would be large. No such *written* law however is found in P. The law of first-fruits goes back to the Book of the Covenant, and is worked out in greater detail in Deuteronomy (Exod. xxiii. 19, Deut. xiv. 23, 28, xxvi. 2-10). Lastly, the tithe regulations are described briefly (vv. 37-9). The tithes are of vegetable produce. This is true of the tithes mentioned

in Deut. xiv. and Num. xviii. In Lev. xxvii. 32 f., a tithe of the flock and herd is also laid down. This, it would seem, is a later provision, when the need for a larger income was felt to be necessary. The Levites collect the tithes from the farms, under the direction of a priest, and a tenth part of what they secure is then paid into the sanctuary. This also is the arrangement of Numbers. In Neh. xiii. 10 we learn that the tithes had during Nehemiah's absence been neglected, and the Levites had been obliged to work on the land. No details of Nehemiah's regulations are there given, but there is nothing to prevent their having been identical with these of Neh. x. 38 ff., a partial approximation to the full amount demanded by Lev. xxvii. Nothing can show more clearly than the whole passage (x. 32-9) how the law developed in response to the changing needs of the community.

JEREMIAH XVII. 19-27

NOTES

In these verses we have an interesting comment on the view of the sabbath expressed in the last chapter of Nehemiah. It is certainly different from anything in Jeremiah, as from the well-known passage in 3rd Isaiah (see p. 169). After a rhetorical introduction in the plural (*kings* can never have been uttered during the actual monarchy) the duty of carrying no load in or out of the gates of the city (the stress on the gates seems almost to imply that they are new) is emphasized, exactly as in Neh. xiii. 19. The sabbath day must be hallowed (v. 22), that is, kept from any profane use; disobedience to this precept (for which no reason is given, humanitarian or legalistic) has meant (v. 23) and will mean (v. 27) calamity; obedience will restore all the glories of the past, more particularly a re-peopling of the city, a restoration of its royal splendours, and the abundant offerings for the temple. The words suggest a mind in eager sympathy with Nehemiah's measures, and familiar with the language of the earlier prophets—more familiar with their language than their thought; and the forecast of v. 24 may well have been twisted into the accusation referred to in Neh. vi. 7, 'prophets appointed to say, there is a king in Judah'.



THE 'TARIFF' OF MARSEILLES

Fragment of a Carthaginian inscription (4th-2nd cent. B. C.) prescribing the dues to be paid to the priests by persons offering certain sacrifices. Similar fragments of ritual have been found at Carthage, and this, which was actually discovered at Marseilles, was probably taken there, already inscribed, to be set up in a temple. The regulations resemble, but are not identical with, those of Leviticus.

EZRA-NEHEMIAH

Composition of Ezra-Nehemiah. The first six chapters of Ezra and eight chapters of Nehemiah have already been studied. We must now turn to the consideration of the whole book in which these chapters occur. We are right in using the singular rather than the plural; Ezra and Nehemiah, as they stand in our English Bibles, form one book; but no book in the Bible has had a more perplexing history; and it may be that the book we have is but a disordered and incomplete edition of the original. Let us look at the facts.

In its general arrangement of the books, including that of the two books before us, our English Bible represents the accepted or Massoretic arrangement and text of the Hebrew Bible. And between the two books there is a distinct break, marked by the words (Neh. i. 1) 'the words of Nehemiah'. The Septuagint (LXX) translation of the Hebrew text, as has often been remarked in the previous pages, diverges from the Massoretic both in text and in arrangement. In place of Ezra and Nehemiah, the LXX has two books; the second of these (known as Esdras 2) contains both Ezra and Nehemiah, regarded as a single book; and the first (Esdras 1) contains large sections of our two books, but arranged in a quite different order, with a large section borrowed from 2 Chronicles, and rather more than two chapters which do not occur elsewhere (see pp. 201 f.).

The Vulgate, the Latin version which we owe to Jerome, contains the two books as they stand in the Hebrew and English Bibles; that is, Esdras 2 of the LXX has become the Vulgate 1 and 2 Esdras. But the Vulgate also contains the LXX Esdras 1, which appears there as 3 Esdras; it is also printed in our English Apocrypha as 1 Esdras (!). It is followed by a further book, 4 Esdras, represented in the English Apocrypha as 2 Esdras; this, however, is a much later work not claiming to deal with the circumstances of Ezra's times at all, and with it we need not further concern ourselves.

Confining ourselves to the LXX and the Massoretic Bibles, it is clear that we have two versions of the same material. Josephus used Esdras 1 and not Esdras 2; and the priority of position suggests that the Greek-speaking Jews at least re-

garded it as the more important. But its additions, canonical and uncanonical, arouse suspicion; although we shall see that a good deal of suspicion attaches to the Massoretic version. The LXX, however, shows clearly enough that it regarded our two books (LXX Esdras 2) as one book; and this is borne out by Hebrew manuscripts and Rabbinic references to the books and to their place in the Hebrew canon. The book (Ezra-Nehemiah), on the other hand, is far from being homogeneous. This is suggested by the treatment of its material in LXX Esdras 1, and is clear from even a casual reading of the book; the break at the end of Ezra vi is as distinct as that at the end of Ezra x; and the memoirs of Nehemiah (see above, pp. 180 ff.) are quite distinct from chapters vii-xii.

The matter is, however, a good deal more complicated. Setting aside the Nehemiah memoirs already considered, there is a large section written in Aramaic, containing a number of documents purporting to be official papers (iv. 76-vi. 18; see above pp. 161 f.); a long list of names (Ezra ii), which recurs in Nehemiah (vii. 6-73); and there is at least one clear misplacement (iv. 7 compared with v. 1; see p. 208). Further, we have a section relating to Ezra written in the first person singular (memoirs of Ezra, it may be surmised, parallel to those of Nehemiah). All this points to a compiler, who selected the documents, connected them by a continuous narrative, and framed the whole into one book.

Who was he? The answer generally given by scholars to-day is that he is identical with the compiler of Chronicles, known as the Chronicler. Ezra, indeed, continues quite naturally the narrative of 2 Chronicles—the last two verses of 2 Chronicles breaking off in the middle of a sentence (as, curiously enough, does LXX Esdras 1) and being repeated as the first words of Ezra. But, more striking than this, the style and thought of Ezra-Nehemiah, when we have abstracted from it the documents and memoirs, are indistinguishable from those of the Chronicler. This is the more noticeable when we reflect that both in style and thought the Chronicler is among the most individual and easily recognized of Hebrew writers. Indeed, he has gone far, it may be said, to impose his characteristic conceptions of the past upon the traditional view of Hebrew history. These conceptions are in the main three; that the legislation of Judaism (and especially those ritual parts of it which are now regarded as latest) were in force from the time of Moses onwards, and were promulgated by him; that right through the history of Israel divine favour was condi-

tioned solely by obedience to those laws ; and that this legislation was reintroduced by Ezra, who travelled with this object from Babylon, in the middle of the fifth century, before Nehemiah left the court at Susa. It would, indeed, be exceedingly unjust to consider the Chronicler as nothing more than a ritualist, regarding religion as if it were simply a performance of external ceremonies. He has a deep sense of the power of faith, and a passionate loyalty to the God of his fathers ; he combines the spirit of 2 Maccabees with that of the eleventh chapter of the Epistle to the Hebrews. He cannot, however, be called a reliable historical authority. He certainly had access to valuable historical documents, and could make use of them ; but even a cursory comparison with Kings will show how the facts had to conform to his imaginative pictures of the past glories of the Temple, and his schematic view of the judgements and rewards of Jahveh. He does not explicitly refer to the Samaritan schism ; but his use of his materials in Ezra-Nehemiah shows that he believed a large body of exiles to have returned from Babylon at the beginning of the reign of Cyrus. These people and their descendants formed, in his eyes, the true Jewish community ; they were opposed at one period and another by their neighbours in the north ; they (or at least the best of them) were convinced that with these neighbours, as with the other non-Jewish inhabitants of Palestine, they could tolerate neither inter-marriage nor common worship. And this has remained the traditional view of the origin of the Samaritan community.

What, then, is the date of the Chronicler ? The two books of Chronicles, taken by themselves, cannot well be earlier than the fourth century B.C. ; the genealogy in 1 Chron. iii. 19-24, if we follow the Hebrew text and allow only twenty years to a generation, would bring us down to *c.* 400 ; if we followed the Greek text, we should have to place the date a century later. Ezra-Nehemiah brings its narrative down to some time later than 432 B.C. ; it refers to the great-grandson of a contemporary of Nehemiah (Neh. xii. 11) ; and its use of the term 'king of Persia' instead of simply 'king', in Ezra i. 1, iii. 7, iv. 3, vii. 1, certainly points to a period when the king known to the readers of the book was no longer a king of Persia. Haggai and Zechariah do not tell their readers that Darius was king of Persia. It was enough to call him simply the king. The indications thus point to about 300 B.C. as the date of the Chronicler's work. Is it, then, to be regarded as fictitious—as a 'historical romance' ? Not necessarily. It contains embedded

within it documents of great importance (see above on Nehemiah); and its view of history, so far from being an invention of the writer, was in all probability the accepted view of his circle and even his time, and as such it throws a very valuable light on the post-canonical history of Jewish thought. That its view of the past was wrong we have already seen reason to believe; and this may in part justify Torrey's sweeping condemnation of the Chronicler as an historian. Nor can we accept his statements of fact on his own authority. But we have every reason to think that he gave us what was generally held at the time. This is what the majority of ancient historians have done. What constitutes the weakness, and the interest, of the Chronicler is that he took less trouble than most of the greater historians to ask if what his contemporaries believed was true.

But what of the documents embedded in the books? We have already discussed the memoirs of Nehemiah. What then of the memoirs, as they have been called, of Ezra (vii. 27-ix. 15)? This implies two questions—Are the 'memoirs' really the work of Ezra, and, if so, when did Ezra live? As regards the first, the chapters under consideration cannot have come directly from the hand of Ezra as Neh. i-vii. 5 appears to have come from the hand of Nehemiah; for in the first place the third person is used quite frequently, though not universally, and there are other marks of editing; and in the second, several of the statements made are clearly wrong (see comments in selected passages below) though quite in accord with the views of the Chronicler. Torrey, dwelling on these points, and noticing that other sections of the book (e. g. Neh. vii. 73-x. 39) show the same characteristics, argues that there were no memoirs of Ezra at all, and that language and thought alike belong to the Chronicler. Others (e. g. Batten, in I.C.C.), more cautiously, have separated off what belongs plainly to a later age, and have found in what is left material that may be attributed to Ezra with some confidence. When, then, did Ezra live? The question has even been asked, did he ever exist? To the Chronicler, as to later Judaism, he is the restorer of the authority of the Mosaic Torah. But he is never mentioned by Nehemiah in his memoirs (though the Chronicler recognizes Nehemiah's influence as necessary for the success of Ezra's projects); nor is he mentioned in the long catalogue of famous men in Ecclesiasticus (nor, for that matter, in Hebrews xi), or, where we might certainly have expected his name, in 2 Macc. And a character whose performances fell so deplorably below his resources as these are described in Ezra vii, may well, it is argued,

make us suspect his existence. But neither history nor tradition works in this way. Characters are not invented; but they are constantly embellished. The silence of Ecclesiasticus (c. 180 B.C.) shows that the Chronicler's views were not universally accepted even then; it does not show that there was no one called Ezra who was revered long after he had lived as a 'ready scribe' in the Torah.

At what period, then, is he to be dated? Here the silence of Nehemiah is more important than that of Ecclesiasticus. The arrangement of Ezra-Nehemiah certainly suggests that Ezra preceded Nehemiah, and in one passage (Neh. viii. 9) the 'Tirshatha' (i. e. Nehemiah) is mentioned as functioning in the company of Ezra. But, considering the condition of things which Nehemiah found on his arrival in Jerusalem, and the caution which even he felt to be necessary, it is hardly conceivable that Ezra could have brought off his expedition previously. Moreover, the laws to which Nehemiah refers are certainly not laws that have been definitely accepted as authoritative (cf. on Neh. xiii above). If, then, Ezra came after Nehemiah, what is the interval between them? In Ezra vii. 8, Ezra's expedition is dated in the seventh year of Artaxerxes. This, however, is unfortunately ambiguous. There were two Persian kings named Artaxerxes, of whom the first, Longimanus, reigned from 464-424, and the second, Mnemon, from 404-359. If we may rely on this notice, we must date Ezra's start from Babylon either in 458 or 398 B.C. If the notice is founded on a genuine tradition referring to the reign of the second Artaxerxes, we can easily see how the special interest of the Chronicler led him to suppose that the first Artaxerxes must have been meant. But, apart from historical probabilities, Ezra x. 6 refers to Jehohanan, 'the son of Eliashib', as the contemporary of Ezra. From Neh. xii. 11, 22, this Jehohanan is identical with Jonathan, the *grandson* of Eliashib, who was himself a contemporary of Nehemiah (Neh. xiii. 4). Jehohanan was high-priest in 408. Thus the Chronicler himself appears to point to the later date for Ezra, i. e. at the beginning of the fourth century B.C., and with this conclusion the data supplied by the Aswan papyri (see below, p. 220) would appear to be in agreement.

The dates of most of the passages purporting to contain official papers have already been discussed (Ezra i. 2-4; iv. 8-16 and 18-22; v. 3-5; v. 7 b-17; vi. 3-12). The remaining one (vii. 12-26) is considered below. It must be remembered that such papers were preserved, as is clear from the Aswan

papyri. Whether the historian in every case transcribed them completely or accurately is another matter. A study of the documents in Ezra, especially of that in ch. vii, suggests that the Chronicler held himself at liberty to adapt his material, if he did not actually invent it, to what he thought appropriate to the situation. The same may be said of the lists of names, and also of the numbers. The genealogy of Ezra himself in vii. 1-5 is clearly incorrect (see below); and the numbers as given in Esdras 1 appear to be far more reliable than those in the Massoretic text.

What was the original form of the Chronicler's book? If we may assume that the Chronicler believed that Ezra preceded Nehemiah, and that he arranged his matter in what he held to be the historical order, we may place the chapters, following the analysis of Torrey, thus:—Ezra i; 1 Esdras iv. 47-56; 1 Esdras iv. 62-v. 6 (see pp. 201 ff.); Ezra ii. 1-iv. 5, 24; Ezra v. 1-viii. 36; Neh. vii. 70-viii. 18; Ezra ix. 1-x, 14; Neh. ix. 1-x. 39; Ezra iv. 7-23; Neh. i. 1-vii. 69; Neh. xi. 1-xiii. 31.

What was the law brought by Ezra? Ever since Wellhausen's *Prolegomena* it has been held with increasing confidence that Deuteronomy was the basis of the reformation of Josiah in 621, and that the law promulgated by Ezra was either the Priestly Code or that code combined with the other codes in the Pentateuch. It is now, however, generally agreed that the Priestly Code, P (if it ever had a separate existence), was not complete in Ezra's time, at least if Ezra was the contemporary of Nehemiah; and serious doubts have been raised of late as to the identity of Deuteronomy with Josiah's law-book. It will be worth while briefly to consider what facts we have to go upon. We begin with Josiah's concentration of religious ritual at Jerusalem, following that of Hezekiah, and certainly based on a 'book' containing Deuteronomic ideals. In conformity with this book, and its law of the single sanctuary, no temple is known to have existed among the exiles in Babylon; although there was a temple in the Jewish colony at Aswan in the reign of Cambyses. The rebuilding of the Temple in Jerusalem was begun soon after the accession of Cyrus, and with its completion, in 516 (if not before), must have come into prominence in the community the priestly order, ritual and sacrifice, Temple dues and offerings, and ceremonial holiness. During the fifth century, a section of the community came to lay great stress on racial purity, though there were various protests against the exclusiveness that followed from this, both

from higher and lower motives; and the priests as a whole seem (surprisingly enough) not to have favoured it. In the middle of the century, Nehemiah appeals to certain principles which are distinctly Deuteronomic; but, from the character of the appeals, we can hardly tell whether the principles were already written down in a code, or not yet universally recognized and accepted. At the close of the century, the Jewish colonists at Aswan write for assistance; they had a temple of their own, to which they make pathetic reference, and they were polytheists; they do not indeed reveal their polytheism in their dispatches to Jerusalem; but they betray no suspicion that their temple was unlawful. Either before or more probably after this, Ezra's code is accepted. It did not, however, include Lev. xvi, and the latest regulations in P on tithes. When the Samaritans definitely seceded, the whole of the Pentateuch was not only in existence, but had won entire reverence, which was as deeply rooted in the seceders as in the Jews themselves. The earliest date suggested for this event is *c.* 432 (in which case Ezra must have been a contemporary of Nehemiah); the latest, *c.* 332.

The above data will make it clear that we must be prepared to distinguish between a more or less partial recognition of a legal or ritual principle, and its final promulgation in a written and authoritative code. We must also remember that the Hebrew law was 'torah' (properly, 'instruction'), and not, like a modern statute, enforceable in a court of law. Disobedience to a law does not prove that the law was not known, any more than a reference to a particular law proves that the code in which it appears in the Pentateuch was then in existence. And when laws were actually written, they might be neglected or forgotten by the mass of the population even more easily than they could be defied. They needed a dominant personality to secure obedience, a Josiah, a Nehemiah, or an Ezra. The lawgiver was the champion or the advocate.

It is thus very difficult, and not specially important, to fix the actual date of a code. When it is fixed, we have always to take account of the possibility of successive redactions and of obstinate neglect. It is more valuable to trace the recognition of certain principles, and to observe, when we read of the promulgation of some 'book', what were the provisions on which, as a consequence, stress was laid.

In particular, the identity of Deuteronomy with Josiah's law-book (even the 'kernel' of it, chh. xii-xxvi) has recently been searchingly criticized. Kennett and Hölscher hold it to be

much later; the former arguing that it reflects attempts to harmonize the practice of the Jewish community in the fifth century with that of central Palestine; the latter, that it is an ideal reconstruction of the law, which could never have been contemplated under the monarchy, but expressed the aspirations of an age when the nation had become a church. Welch, on the other hand, believes that its main provisions are earlier than Josiah, possibly as early as Solomon; and that, rightly understood, they form the basis for the proceedings of both Hezekiah and Josiah himself. A later editor of Deuteronomy, however, Steuernagel (second edition, revised, 1924), while urging that a large amount of revision was carried out, holds that the central part of Deuteronomy was the 'book' discovered in the Temple in 621. It is impossible here to do more than state the various conclusions; but it may well be that these conclusions are not so diverse as they seem. If we allow for the difference as stated above between partial recognition and authoritative promulgation, we can see how Deuteronomy may have been proclaimed at Josiah's court, and yet have had to fight for obedience in the middle of the fifth century; how parts of it could have been used both for and against the party of exclusiveness; and how Nehemiah might have appealed to it with only partial success. We can see, too, how the law, elaborated by the study of generations of legal pundits in Babylon, on being brought into Palestine with its heated controversies, would in certain sections at once arouse strong opposition in some quarters, perhaps the very quarters in which other sections would be as warmly welcomed. The priests seem never to have been anxious to drive away strangers; but they could not deny the advantages of a generous income. Was the final acceptance of the law the result of a compromise? The truth is that the whole problem is distinctly more complicated than has generally been supposed. It is not simply a matter of comparing the various sections, and herding off divergent laws in separate editions. We have to trace the growth of ideas, their effect on one another, and the extension of their influence on the community. That, and not the precise moment when P was joined to Deuteronomy, or when Deut. xii-xxvi was united with Deut. i-xi and xxvii-xxxiv, is what matters for history.

It remains to give a brief account of the section in Esdras 1 which has no counterpart in the canonical work of the Chronicler, iii. 1-v. 6. Most of Esdras 1 points back to a Hebrew original, although this is not our Massoretic text; the divergences are

too great. There must have been a second edition of the Hebrew text of this part of the Chronicler's work. But the section in question is thought by Torrey to have been translated from an Aramaic original. The story is that three youths belonging to the court of Darius decided on a contest of wits, each of them to write down a sentence and submit it to the judgement of the king. The first wrote that the most powerful thing on earth is wine; the second, the king; the third, women—and truth. Each is then bidden to defend his thesis, which he does at length. The palm is assigned to the third—not, apparently for his statement of the influence of women, but for the eulogy of truth which follows; if this last is an original part of the story, the third youth appears to have had rather an unfair advantage. This youth, we are told in a parenthesis, is Zerubbabel, and when the king asks him to name his reward, he begs for the restoration (in accordance with the king's vow) of Jerusalem. The king then makes out a comprehensive order that the Jews are to be permitted to return, that their territory is to be restored to them, that the sacred vessels are to be given up, and that liberal revenues are to be assigned to the new community. The Jews hold a feast to celebrate the permission, and then, under a cavalry convoy a thousand strong, the leading members of the community, with their families, make the journey to Jerusalem.

The long story of the youths' debate seems strangely out of place; and Torrey has made the convincing suggestion that it has been added to an original portion of the work of the Chronicler, preserved here, but omitted from the canonical Ezra. He points out that between Ezra i and ii there is a gap; Sheshbazzar drops out, and Zerubbabel is never properly introduced. The latter part of the narrative (Torrey would confine it to iv. 47-56, iv. 62-v. 6) would explain how the second expedition under Zerubbabel came to start. Some further textual emendations are necessary; and the narrative, as Torrey allows it to us, does not explain how the youth gained the favour of Darius, and indeed seems very unwilling to mention the name of Zerubbabel at all (though Torrey by a clever conjecture succeeds in inserting it towards the close). Doubtless the omission, whether original or not, was filled up by a later editor who knew what he thought a good story when he saw it, and so attached it to his work here.¹

¹ It is of interest to refer to the well-known story (also connected with Darius) of the debate of the seven Persian nobles on the best form of government, Hdt. iii. 80-2. Herodotus remarks that his story had been criticized,

NOTES

EZRA VII. 1-10, 27, 28. With this chapter the author comes to the actual career of Ezra. Indeed, except for the third person, we might now be dealing with those 'memoirs' of Ezra which have been discovered in ch. viii; and the change of persons may not be material. His genealogy is recorded, and his position; the favour he had received from the king, and then his arrival with his companions in Jerusalem. The order is not very logical, and the section ends (v. 10) with renewed emphasis on his devotion. The genealogy, however, is not long enough; it would not even carry us back to the beginning of the monarchy, much less to the wilderness; and the names do not entirely tally with the lists in Neh. xi and 1 Chron. vi.

6. A *ready scribe* is properly a quick writer, cf. Ps. xlv. 1; but 'writers to the law' naturally became learned in it—'scribes' in the more familiar sense. Did Ezra call himself such?

7. The *Nethinim* were probably subordinate Temple officials, perhaps a lower grade of Levites. They are only once mentioned outside Ezra-Neh., but their mention in Neh. iii. 31 shows them not to have been 'an invention of the Chronicler'. The date of this expedition is the seventh year of Artaxerxes; the first day of the year; and the journey (some 900 miles) took four months. The caravan, a large one, must have moved slowly.

Verse 10 amplifies v. 9. A scribe such as Ezra was had three objects, to study the Torah, to carry it out, and to teach it to the community (cf. Is. xlii. 1 ff. pp. 106 ff.). Nothing could show more clearly that the 'law' or Torah was not regarded as a body of authoritative statutes, but a collection of ancient texts, which had to be investigated and perhaps collated, and then expounded and commended to the obedience of society.

The date (see above, p. 198 and cf. Ezra iv. 7 and v. 1) is vague. Nehemiah too refers to Artaxerxes (i. 1, xiii. 6). In v. 6 Ezra is briefer than Nehemiah in i. 7-8. But in vv. 11-26 we have a document (the sixth so far mentioned) which goes far beyond anything given to Nehemiah, or what we can imagine as accorded by any Persian

but it was true 'all the same'. T. R. Glover (*Herodotus*) is half inclined to believe him. The story in Esdras 1 shows that a debate might occur to other than Greek minds; and both historians, however inadequate their critical faculty, may have hit upon a piece of genuine tradition.

monarch to a religious functionary in a subject nationality. He has an immense treasure (vv. 15, 22), and apparently unlimited powers over the royal exchequer and the political administration of the country into which he is travelling (vv. 20, 25 f.). It need hardly be pointed out that Ezra, in spite of all his perplexities, uses none of these extraordinary privileges. Instead, he watches his mission ending in failure. It may be that the original decree is contained in vv. 12-18. Even then, we are still left in doubt as to which Artaxerxes is meant. Nehemiah's silence as to any previous mission of Ezra has been explained as due to Ezra's failure; there was nothing for Nehemiah to say! But Ezra's attempt, even if we neglect ch. vii. 11-26, could hardly have failed to leave a single trace for Nehemiah, who wanted all the help he could get, to mention; on the other hand, the community which Ezra finds in Palestine is much more like that which Nehemiah left behind him than that which he found on his arrival. Ezra implies the work of Nehemiah, not vice versa. And if Artaxerxes I had sent Ezra some few years before, would he not have reminded Nehemiah of the fact when Nehemiah asked permission to go? Ezra's thanksgiving (vv. 27, 28) begins the 'memoirs' in the first person, and they are continued in viii. 15. But are these memoirs genuine? See above, p. 197. There is much in them that bears marks of authenticity; but they appear to have been worked over a good deal more vigorously than, for example, the 'we' passages in Acts; the original Ezra, who left Babylon some fifty years after Nehemiah's first departure, being obscured by the traditional picture of Nehemiah's predecessor, armed with his tremendous firman.

EZRA VIII. 15-36. A moving description of the journey of a crowd of priests and laymen, and their families, without an escort, but with large Temple treasures, into Palestine. The company, after its start, finds itself to be deficient in Levites; but an appeal for these is successful. A fast is then held, and the custody of the treasure is given to the priests and Levites, with some others (if we may follow Esdras); and the journey to Jerusalem is safely accomplished. The treasure is duly handed over to the Temple authorities, the new-comers offer sacrifices for their safe arrival, and the royal documents are entrusted to the Persian officials.

15. *Ahava* is really a river (cf. v. 21), perhaps a tributary of the Tigris.

17. *Casiphia* is a Jewish colony, also perhaps on the Tigris. The

term *place* or *spot*, as in Arabic, often suggests special sanctity (cf. Gen. xxviii. 17), possibly, in this case, because of some important synagogue; the existence of a temple (as has been suggested) is hardly likely. Why had no Levites (Esdras says, also, no priests) joined the expedition? It would seem that the clerical classes, as distinct from the 'scribes', in Babylon as in Palestine, were not idealists.

25-7. The list of the treasures is enormous. The silver would amount to nearly a quarter of a million pounds, the gold to considerably more than half a million. The daric was probably equal to about a pound sterling. Verses 26 f. are clearly additions, if the narrative as a whole is to be taken as authentic. The safety of the caravan (v. 31) is regarded as little less than miraculous.

EZRA IX. 1-X. 17. After the new-comers have settled down, but at an uncertain interval, the civil or lay leaders of the community report that the priests and the people as a whole have intermarried with the non-Jewish population, thus destroying the purity of the *holy seed*. Ezra in the deepest distress and humiliation thereupon makes a confession of corporate sin before God. As he concludes it, he finds a large number of Jews outside, anxious to put an end to the scandal. They suggest a solemn 'league and covenant' that all foreign wives shall be divorced, and they ask Ezra to arrange to carry out the matter. The whole population of the province is then summoned in three days' time (though in the middle of winter) with the severest penalties for recalcitrance; and it is then agreed, with only four dissentients (two priests and two Levites), that an influential lay commission, with Ezra at the head, should be appointed to see that all the foreign women were expelled. The commission began its work in less than a fortnight after it had been appointed, and it finished in three months' time.

What was the reason for these drastic measures? Intermarriage would be very natural if women, among the Jewish population in general, or the new-comers (apparently also culprits) in particular, were few; we hear of no non-Jewish *husbands*. We have already seen that there had been a distinct incursion of neighbouring tribesmen into Judaea after the fall of the city, and that strong feelings had been expressed by the recent prophets (especially Malachi and 3-Isaiah). Deuteronomy has an important passage, xxiii. 3-8, bearing on the subject; there, Ammon and Moab are treated as perpetual aliens (cf. the story in Gen. xix. 30 ff.); while permission is given to

'naturalize' the grandchildren of Edomites and Egyptians. This is surprising, for we know the deep hatred felt towards Edom, and the attitude of the earlier prophets to Egypt. Nehemiah, in a narrative of what took place, as we hold, some forty years before this, mentions only Moab and Ammon and Ashdod. He does not refer to any divine command; only to the fact that the children were growing up in ignorance of their 'father' tongue, and to Solomon's seduction by his foreign wives. The prominence given to these two peoples is probably due to the long, and natural, prevalence of close relations between them; cf. Jer. xl. 11, xli. 15, where the fugitives take refuge in Moab and Ammon (as well as Edom) after the fall of the city, and Ishmael flees to Ammon after his murder of Gedaliah.

To Ezra, the racial problem in this crisis is religious rather than social or political. The preservation of racial purity is a duty owed to Jahveh. The national *seed* (v. 2) is holy, and must not be profaned. This idea we can trace back to Ezekiel and the Holiness Code (Lev. xvii-xxvi); other considerations were doubtless in mind; but expediency would have counselled the turning of a blind eye. We cannot tell whether the trouble was more widespread than in Nehemiah's day; Ezra's manner of dealing with it was different from that of the rugged governor (note '*my* hair' in v. 2 and '*their* hair' in Neh. xiii. 25); but he clearly had behind him a large body of support, which Nehemiah had not. Ezra's prayer is touching (vv. 6-15).

A *nail* (v. 8) should be a tent-pin; the reference to the clemency of the Persian satraps is noteworthy (a parallel would be a Brahmin eulogy of the British *raj* in India); the *wall* (v. 9) seems to refer to Nehemiah's wall. And since the quotations in v. 11 ff. are from Deuteronomy, the *prophets* must refer to Moses. The plan of divorce is Shecaniah's (v. 3; he was apparently a leading new-comer, ch. viii. 5); there is no definite law on the subject. But at the close of the day (ix. 5) Ezra goes to spend the night in the chamber of Jehohanan (so Esdras); in Neh. xii. 10f., Jehohanan is the grandson of Eliashib, the contemporary of Nehemiah, and himself a leader in lax conduct. It is not easy to see who are specially regarded as culprits, the already existing population of the province (x. 9) or the new-comers. Leading priests are certainly guilty, and we hear of no 'purity party' recently arrived. The new-comers carry out the plan (v. 16). In place of the four dissentients (v. 15), the Greek text (Esdras 2) reads 'only Jonathan &c. were with me in this matter'. Does this suggest that at one stage of the proceedings, Ezra, like

Nehemiah before him, felt himself in a minority? The narrative as a whole, however, points to the thoroughness with which Nehemiah had forced his conceptions upon public opinion.

NEHEMIAH VIII. The account of the solemn reading of the Law on the first day of the seventh month, and of the Feast of Booths on the day after. The last words of ch. vii are repeated here by the compiler from Ezra iii. 1. Neh. vii and the first words of ch. viii. 1, are repeated from Ezra ii. 1, iii. 1; the narrative in Ezra then proceeds to the building of the altar, in the time of Zerubbabel.

1. Note that the people themselves demand the law-book from Ezra; the previous part of the story, evidently needed, is here omitted.

2. *the seventh month*: Tishri. There were two beginnings for the Jewish year, in autumn and in spring. What would seem the older of the two, the civil year, began in autumn; after the exile, the Babylonian year is found, beginning in the spring, with the passover, and used for ecclesiastical purposes. Nisan, the first month, is March-April; and the seventh is September-October.

Verse 3 anticipates and summarizes the following narrative.

4. *pulpit* should be 'platform', in view of the number standing thereon with Ezra.

5. For *he was above all the people*, the Greek Esdras reads 'he sat in glory before all'.

7. The interpreters are distinct from the men who stood with Ezra on the platform. *And* before 'the Levites' should be omitted with Esdras.

8. For *they* read 'he' (Ezra). Add 'distinctly', or as R.V. margin 'with an interpretation': the same word occurs in Ezra iv. 18 (R.V. 'plainly': margin 'translated'). Here the law would be read in the (now little understood) Hebrew and translated or paraphrased (as was usual, later, in the synagogue services) into the widely-spoken Aramaic.

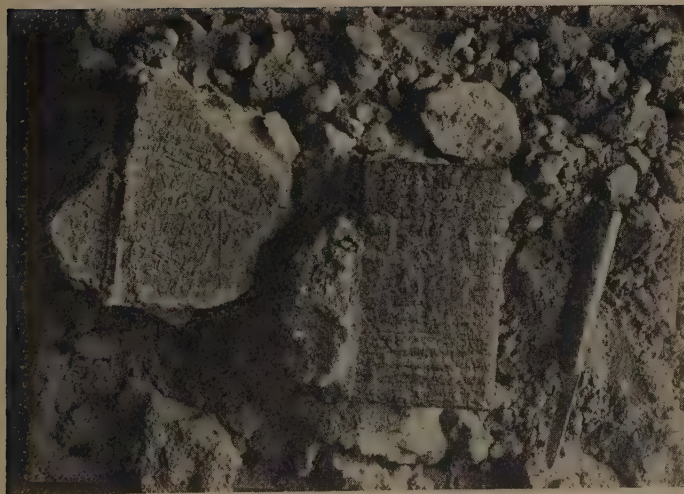
9. The mention of Nehemiah here, as the Tirshatha (or governor; the word used in ch. vii and Ezra ii), would appear to be a mistake; Nehemiah, we have seen reason to believe (see p. 183), had long since passed away. There is indeed, strangely, no further reference to the governor. In Esdras, 'the governor said to Ezra and the Levites'. We can hardly suppose that a civil authority would have to instruct Ezra on the ecclesiastical calendar; but Ezra may well have reminded the people (rhetorically) of what they must have known when they

met at Jerusalem. (They wept, as their ancestors had wept when they compared the new Temple with the traditions of the old one.) The day is that appointed in the Priestly Code for the Feast of Trumpets (Lev. xxiii. 23 ff.). The people might be ignorant of this. A longer account is given in Num. xxix. 1-6, but no mention is made of a feast. The feast now prescribed, however, is effective in changing the laments to a more appropriate mirth (v. 12). The law which Ezra read, and which took six hours (v. 3) to read, was probably the Priestly Code (see pp. 57 f.), which fits the attitude of both Ezra and the people to the day chosen.

The clergy and the more important laymen of the community (v. 13) reassemble on the next day; and learn that the festival of booths or tents (of 'camping out') is to follow immediately (v. 14). This festival had been already known, and indeed held in the days of Solomon and by Zerubbabel (according to the Chronicler, 2 Chron. viii. 13, and also Ezra iii. 4; cf. Hos. xii. 9). But it may well have been new to the populace more than a century after Zerubbabel. They could hardly be expected to be familiar with ancient codes or practice. But there is a difficulty as regards the date. As the law stands in Leviticus (xxiii. 33) and Numbers (xxix. 12), the festival is to be held on the fifteenth of the month, and on the tenth of the month (unmentioned here) comes the day of Atonement. The day of Atonement (as prescribed in Lev. xvi and referred to in Lev. xxiii) is generally regarded as belonging to the latest section of the Priestly Code; and the discrepancy of dates may be removed by some textual correction, or even by supposing that vv. 13-18 have no definite connexion with vv. 1-2.

15. The whole population of the province goes for branches into the hill country south of Jerusalem; and those who have no houses in the city camp out in the open spaces (v. 16). It is assumed, however, that the population is composed of returned exiles (v. 17). The intermission of the feast since the Hebrews entered Palestine (v. 17) is not strictly correct, according to the Chronicler himself; unless the words refer to the special enthusiasm of this occasion. The assembly on the last day (v. 18) is specially mentioned in Leviticus and Numbers.

EZRA IV. 7-23. This section interrupts the narrative in which it occurs. Artaxerxes I came to the throne twenty years after the death of Darius, and long after Zerubbabel and Haggai had passed away. Moreover, the section is occupied with the building of the city walls,



*Cuneiform Tablets as they are found embedded in rubble
From Kish*



Cuneiform Tablets excavated

whereas in ch. v, as in iv. 1-6, the problem is that of the erection of the Temple and its wall. Let us take the passage as it stands.

Verse 7 is an introduction, written, like the preceding, in Hebrew; what follows, down to the end of vi. 18, is in Aramaic. This language was fast becoming the recognized *lingua franca* of western Asia; it was well understood in Babylon; and cuneiform tablets are often docketed in Aramaic. Hebrew remained the literary language of Palestine; but it was no longer spoken commonly by the educated or understood by the mass of the people (cf. 2 Kings xviii. 26; Neh. viii. 8). A rough analogy is found in the employment, in modern Greece, of literary and popular forms of the language side by side. Since the letter was written in Aramaic (language, not *character*), the last clause of the verse must be wrong. *Set forth* means 'translated' (the root which is found in 'Targum' and 'Dragoman'). Perhaps for *Syrian* read 'Persian'.

8. *Rehum* and *Shimshai* are apparently Persian officials, and not 'Samaritan' ill-wishers (cf. v. 14). They detect quite naturally a political menace in the fortifying of Jerusalem (their interest is not at all religious); in the early years of Artaxerxes Marathon and Salamis are still clear memories.

9, 10. The catalogue of nations is wanting in the Greek Esdras, and is clearly out of place. The writer responsible for it wishes to connect the letter with the religious hostility of the northern population. *Osnappar* has been identified (on the score of sound) with Ashurbani-pal; but the colonizing of Samaria was complete when he came to the throne; Shalmaneser began the siege of Samaria, and Sargon conquered the city.

11. The names of the senders should be inserted here; the dispatch could hardly be anonymous. *And so forth* is not an editorial abbreviation; it means 'and now', and should begin the next sentence.

12. To what actual operations does this refer? Nehemiah cannot yet be on the spot. There must therefore have been a previous attempt, which (v. 23) came to nothing. Possibly it is this attempt which lies behind the language of Is. lx-lxii. The text is here uncertain; the Greek Esdras suggests 'they will not only refuse to pay tribute; they will stand out even against kings'.

14. *dishonour*, 'nakedness', the stripping from the king of his lawful revenues.

16. *beyond the river*: in the whole of the empire west of the Euphrates; a surprising compliment to the warlike capacities of the as yet leaderless Jews.

17. The royal reply, like the original dispatch, lacks the proper opening.

18. *plainly read*, R.V. margin 'translated'; the word used in Neh. viii. 8, but not in v. 7.

20. A reference due to something more than the patriotic pride of the Jewish compiler; Assyrian monarchs had been forced to treat the kingdoms of Israel and Judah with considerable respect.

21. For the second *a decree* read 'the decree'. The first *decree*, if right, must mean a provisional administrative order, until the official firman can arrive from the court.

22. The provincial authorities hardly needed the caution here added; for while the dispatch simply ordered that the work was not to be continued (v. 21; cf. v. 23), we gather from Nehemiah's account that anything which had been done must have been demolished.

Since Nehemiah's expedition took place in the twentieth year of Artaxerxes, this forcible suppression of the operations must have preceded it by a few years at the most. An attractive suggestion is that the news brought to Nehemiah at Shushan (Neh. i. 1) refers to this event; we could then appreciate the desperate need that drove Nehemiah to make his request, and the extreme difficulty and delicacy of doing so. Perhaps the second decree of Ezra iv. 21 was never written; instead, the letters referred to in Neh. ii. 7.

Can we then treat the correspondence in Ezra iv. 7 ff. as genuine? There is no reason why we should not. The text is corrupt; the compiler has evidently not been anxious to reproduce the complete language of the documents (vv. 11, 17); and we may have nothing more than a *précis*; but a forger, with the special interests of the Chronicler, would hardly have invented a purely political complaint, in which the Samaritans are (save for the gloss in vv. 9, 10) left out altogether. It is noteworthy that when Nehemiah does arrive, the Persian officials leave him alone; possibly they washed their hands of him. His difficulties arise from the Samaritans (Neh. ii. 10, 19). A further evidence of genuineness is afforded by the links which connect the correspondence with what precedes and follows. The reference to Ahasuerus (Xerxes) in iv. 6 is an attempt to join up Darius chronologically to Artaxerxes; in v. 24 the reader's attention is wrenched violently back from 'the days of Artaxerxes' to 520 B.C. The Chronicler, with this correspondence to hand, has been led, or misled, into making it an element in his account of the sufferings of the Jews in the early days of the return, and has left the marks of the suture but too visible.

THE ASWAN PAPYRI

For most readers of the Old Testament, with Ezekiel and the second Isaiah in their minds, the land of exile means Babylon. But reference has already been made to the considerable 'dispersion' in Egypt. Jeremiah himself was dragged thither after the murder of Gedaliah, and long before that date Jews had found their way thither and even taken service in the Egyptian army as mercenaries. The journey to Egypt, indeed, was far shorter and easier than that to Babylon; and in spite of the stern refusal of the prophets to regard Egypt as anything but an insidious foe, the Pharaohs were constantly and not unsuccessfully scheming for the favours of the small but important kingdom in southern Palestine. There are indeed but very few traces of direct Egyptian influence on Hebrew culture or religion during the monarchy; but politics and geography cannot be lightly put aside. To the best and most thoughtful minds in Judah, Egypt was and remained a menace—far more serious than Babylon.

In the last generation, however, a piece of evidence from Egypt has shed a curious light on Hebrew religion and culture—illuminating and yet baffling. In 1903 was published the first instalment of a number of Aramaic papyri brought from Aswan (or Assuan, the ancient Syene) on the southern border of Egypt, close to the first cataract on the Nile. It consists of documents from a military colony of Jews settled partly in Aswan itself, and partly on the island of Jeb¹ or Elephantine, opposite Aswan, on the west side of the river. The documents, some of them full and complete, and others mere fragments (but these by no means all of them the least interesting) range over the whole of the fifth century before Christ—that is, from but a short time after the building of the second Temple in Jerusalem to some twenty or thirty years after the second visit of Nehemiah; and they were found in what is practically the same spot as that in which they were written. The writers are all Hebrews, though the language of all the documents is Aramaic—very similar to the Aramaic with which we have already become familiar in our study of Ezra. Their value is thus, historically, on a level with that of Nehemiah's memoirs and the fifth-century prophetic oracles

¹ Pronounced Yeb. It should be remembered that the Hebrew J is always pronounced like the English Y.



GENERAL VIEW OF ASWAN
First Cataract

which have been already commented on—higher indeed than the latter, inasmuch as we can in every case date the Aramaic papyri with exactness, while the oracles, as we have seen, often leave us gravely in doubt as to their exact provenance. At the same time, they inform us about an aspect of Jewish life of which we know nothing from the canonical scriptures. Scattered up and down the later books of the Old Testament are passages which hint at the importance of the dispersion outside Babylon; but all that we had hitherto really known of the Jews in Egypt dates from the Greek period. The papyri indeed point farther back than the date of the earliest of them; since we learn from them that the community possessed a temple as early as the reign of Cambyzes, in 525 B.C., before Haggai and Zechariah had begun to rouse the sluggish ambitions of the community in Jerusalem.

The mention of this temple will at once reveal the religious importance of the documents. For a temple in a foreign land was schismatical and heretical according to the orthodoxy of Deuteronomy. Was then Deuteronomy unknown when this temple was built? If, however, Jerusalem tolerated this shrine (and we shall see reason to think that it did), why was the shrine at Gerizim so deeply detested? Was the temple connected with the prophecy of Is. xix. 19 ('there shall be an altar to Jahveh in the midst of the land of Egypt')? And what was its relation to the later temple of Onias at Leontopolis, built in 154 B.C.? Or were the demands of the Pentateuch, at any rate at first, understood to apply only to Palestine? The documents supply many facts which at once elucidate and complicate these questions; but it would be well to notice first the character and contents of the find as a whole. The earliest document is an agreement as to the division of some property, dated 495 B.C.; the second concerns the supply of corn to a garrison, in 484; there is a detailed grant of building rights, carefully guarded, which enables us to construct a plan of part of the settlement, in 471; a case of burglary, where the suspected person is challenged to swear his innocence, in 461; a contract for a loan, about 455; a marriage contract, 425; the well-known letter containing the royal order to keep the Passover, 419; a list of subscribers to the funds of the temple, in the same year; a petition to some authority protesting against ill-usage and persecution, 410; the famous petition to the governor of Judaea for help in the rebuilding of the temple, 408; a memorandum of the answer; and a further complaint from the petitioners, a year or two later.

Aramaic papyrus from Elephantine, containing the petition to Bagoas translated on pp. 226 f.

The documents just referred to are a fair selection from the whole mass. It will be noticed that they are predominantly legal, and the language for such is naturally Aramaic, the commercial and diplomatic language of the Oriental monarchies; even in the seventh century we find, on Assyrian clay tablets, Aramaic marginal notes written in ink; and Cowley, observing that in the petitions relating to the temple, when a much wider range of expression is necessary, solecisms become frequent, conjectures that the writers habitually spoke Hebrew among themselves, but had to use the official language in their dealings with their neighbours.¹

Politically, the Jews were subjects of the Persians in the same sense as the Egyptians themselves. They suffered no national or technical disabilities. This is clear from the way in which the transactions between Jews and Egyptians are referred to in the various deeds. Egypt formed an administrative unity, as Meyer has pointed out, with its carefully organized subordinate districts and law courts and officers. Under the Ptolemies, all land in Egypt was held by the king; his subjects had possession and not property; and this may perhaps have been the arrangement of the Persian government. We are aware too of the special importance attached later by the Romans to their empire in Egypt. The Jewish community, however, had certain powers of self-government, and its head was 'politically recognized by the Persian government'.²

This was the more natural inasmuch as the military character of the community was not forgotten. They called themselves the 'Jewish force'; and they were divided administratively into regiments or detachments and 'centuries', and received pay. We learn from the letter of Aristeas that Jewish mercenaries were employed by Psammetichus, at latest before 590. Placed at Aswan, these mercenaries would naturally be expected to defend the frontier against the Nubians, and there exists an ancient list of fortresses in Nubia, seventeen in number; of these, reckoning from south to north, the fourteenth is Jeb. Eight were in the region of the Second Cataract, and connected with the native Egyptian king Senusret III of the 12th Dynasty.

The documents are full enough to give us a very clear picture of the everyday life of these soldiers or ex-soldiers and their families. Some of the leading characters, like Jedoniah and the well-to-do lady Mibtahiah, almost enable us to write bio-

¹ *Aramaic Papyri of Fifth Century* (1923), p. xv.

² Cowley, *op. cit.*, p. xvii.

graphies of them; we can watch the whole busy life of the community, marrying, giving in marriage, lending, borrowing, building, quarrelling, making contracts and agreements, hiring and labouring, with all the energy that their race has manifested in every age, and not least in the age of the great prophets in Palestine. We know their technical terms for fines, actions, and the like, and can watch the money being paid over, and the documents prepared, much as in Palestine (cf. Jer. xxxii. 9) or Babylon.

In another respect, too, the Jews at Jeb remind us of their fellow countrymen in other ages. They were highly unpopular with their neighbours. Naturally, this does not appear in the majority of the documents dealing with legal technicalities. But the dispatches that have to do with the temple and religion show it unmistakably, and show it as more or less constant. Indeed, the whole community seems to Cowley to have possibly come to an end at the close of the fifth century in what he suggestively calls a 'pogrom'. When we remember the all-too-complacent hospitality to other cults that the prophets attacked in Palestine, this is surprising enough. Could the Jews who forced Jeremiah to settle with them at Tahpanhes and Memphis, or their wives, have roused the religious hatred of the Egyptian population (Jer. xlv)? But it is clear that by the time that the temple at Jeb was built, half a century later, the Egyptians strongly disliked the presence and customs of the Jews. The colonists had probably learnt to keep themselves religiously and socially to themselves; they kept up their own sacrifices (abhorrent to the Egyptians as the killing of cows is to a Hindu); they had their own religious officials; they used for them the term *kohen* (kahin) or priest, universal in the Old Testament; and they carefully preserved their relations with their brethren in Palestine. They had not learnt to cultivate the toleration of their adopted country as their descendants were forced to learn to do in Alexandria.

Have we then a community which represents in Egypt the separatist orthodoxy of the fifth and fourth centuries already noticed in Palestine? Was the garrison made up of the spiritual kinsfolk of Nehemiah? They had their temple with its rites, its dues, and its priests; but they had no sacred scriptures, and, if we could argue from silence (and there is nothing else to argue from), they would be ignorant of the sabbath, and of the very existence of Moses and Aaron, and of the rite of circumcision. It is difficult to believe this. Their ancestors certainly were not so ignorant. But the dispatches

on the Passover and the temple make it quite clear that they had no conception of a written code of laws; and the other religious practices could hardly have been left unmentioned if they had not dropped, in this new home, into subordination and neglect.

Further, the colonists were very far from being monotheistic. This is not simply because oaths by 'heathen' gods are sometimes taken. We find references to at least four divinities who are recognized in the community as well as Jahveh; Anath-Bethel, Anath-Jau, Asham-Bethel, and Herem-Bethel. Anath suggests at once the goddess whose name appears in Anathoth, the home of the prophet Jeremiah three miles north of Jerusalem; Asham recalls a phrase of Amos (viii. 14, where the word translated 'sin' by R.V. seems to stand for Asham); Bethel appears in the documents themselves as a proper name, e. g. Bethel-nathan, 'Bethel has given', like Jonathan, 'Jahveh has given', and its use as a proper name has been suspected to lie behind certain passages in the Old Testament (Amos v. 5, Zech. vii. 2). Of Herem nothing certain is known; the word in Biblical Hebrew means 'ban'; but we find it in the name 'Herem-nathan', like Bethel-nathan above. Anath is feminine, and Anath-Jau (Jau is the shorter form of Jahveh, used throughout these documents) can hardly mean anything but Anath the consort of Jau. But in that case does Anath-Bethel mean Anath the consort of Bethel? Orthodox Hebrews sternly disregarded any sexual element in Jahveh's nature; but the Baals had their regular female counterparts; and the colonists, without being too precise as to their mythology, may well have felt that with a god there ought to be a goddess. It will be remembered how the worship of the 'queen of heaven' roused Jeremiah's anger at Tahpanhes.

But two things must be borne in mind. First, the deities, like their names, are not Egyptian, but Canaanite. The settlers had brought the cult with them; and indeed there is nothing in what we know of the worship at their temple to suggest any Egyptian influence at all. Secondly, this Canaanite cult did not make them the less zealous worshippers of Jahveh. At least a quarter of the proper names mentioned contain the name of Jahveh or Jau; no other god is thus honoured. The temple belongs to Jahveh, and no other god is mentioned in connexion with it (though is it perhaps a coincidence, in view of the above, that the temple had five gates?); and there is no suggestion that any of the other deities could be a rival of Jahveh, or that the god of the community is any one but Jahveh alone, 'the god', or 'the god of heaven'. The famous scene

on Mount Carmel, and Jeremiah's attack on the Jewish women at Tahpanhes, suggest that the Hebrew worshipper had to face an 'either . . . or'; and that was evidently the view of the Deuteronomists; it was as clearly a necessity for all progressive faith, and it was probably embedded in the religion of the desert as Moses handed it on to the Hebrews in Palestine. But it had no place in the popular mind. The most reactionary of the Israelite monarchs (if this is a fair epithet for them) bore names compounded with Jahveh, like the worshippers of Anath and Herem in Jeb; we have no evidence of any actual apostasy except in the rhetorical outburst attributed to Elijah at Horeb; and the greater prophets speak of the monolatrous worship of Jahveh as if it were itself a return to the earlier and purer faith of the desert, uncontaminated by the cults native to Palestine. The championship of this faith found its most vigorous expression in the Deuteronomic reform of Josiah; but the reform, as we know, was unsuccessful; and when Jerusalem fell in 586 the last remnants of the reform party were hopelessly scattered. Yet the old faith lived on, as the older Egyptian beliefs lived on through the reforming and monotheistic zeal of Akhenaten. In the colony of Jeb we do not see it as it appeared to the fiery eyes of the prophets and of the literary school which followed them, on which hitherto we have been dependent for our knowledge of Hebrew 'heresy'. The colonists held it as the faith of their fathers; in their isolation on the distant borders of a foreign land they preserved all the traditions they knew; and, untroubled by the prophets who had scourged and perplexed their ancestors, they were confident alike in their patriotism and their piety.¹

The fact remains, however, that they were isolated. This is clear from the fact of their ignorance of what had been going on in Palestine in the second half of the fifth century. Had they understood anything of the aims of Nehemiah, or the struggle to reinstate the ideas of Deuteronomy, they could hardly have written with the simple and naïve confidence of their first petition to Palestine for help. On the other hand, they are aware of the proper authorities both in Jerusalem and Samaria; they seem to regard the two communities as friendly to one another; they tell the Persian governor at Jerusalem of their appeal for help to Samaria; though it is true that their meaning might be 'if you do not help us, perhaps Samaria will; and we

¹ Some readers may remember a study of a (quite imaginary) Greek community, similarly isolated on the edge of the 'great desert of Gobi or Shamo', by Prof. Gilbert Murray (1890).

shall know to whom to show our gratitude'. Their isolation appears still more clearly from a rescript sent to them eleven years before the petition, and purporting to come from the Persian monarch himself; it contains, according to the clever restoration of Cowley, directions for the date and proper celebration of the Passover and the Feast of Unleavened Bread. 'Were these colonists then', we ask, 'ignorant even of the Passover?' The matter is discussed more fully below (p. 224); but it will be remembered that Josiah's celebration of the Passover in Jerusalem was felt to be a very novel occurrence. With no firm hold on popular imagination or reverence, its details may easily have been forgotten altogether in this outpost of Judaism. But, within a dozen years of Nehemiah's presence in Jerusalem, they are welcomed; and it is a tempting (though quite unverifiable) suggestion that the new zeal connected with this welcome produced at Jeb something akin to the new militant anti-foreign ideals of the separatist party in Jerusalem; that quarrels between them and the Egyptians became more frequent and bitter, until the Egyptians, feeling that it was impossible to live with the colonists, made their attack upon the temple, and, later on, in an outburst of popular hatred, brought the life of the whole community to a violent end.¹

Finally, what light do these documents cast on the questions hitherto discussed—the date of Deuteronomy and the reforms of Ezra, and also on the Samaritan schism? (See below, pp. 232 ff.) It must be confessed, very little. The colonists knew nothing of a Deuteronomic code; that does not prove that the code was not in existence. They knew nothing, it seems, of Josiah's reformation; that does not prove that Josiah's reformation had not taken place. All we can say is that two hundred years after that reformation there were still Jews in the world who were untouched by it; not a very remarkable conclusion after all. Deuteronomic ideas had enough difficulty in getting themselves recognized in Palestine. What then of Ezra's more advanced legislation? For the same reason, we can say equally little. But the silence of the colonists, if it does not prove that Deuteronomy did not exist, certainly cannot be invoked to prove that the Priestly code did exist. There is nothing in our documents to interfere with our previous conclusion, that Ezra had not yet arrived in Palestine at the end of the fifth century. Lastly, what of the relation of the Jews to Samaria? This turns on the mention of the family affairs of

¹ For a curious but not quite close parallel, see the story of the feud between Ombi and Tentyra, in *Juv. Sat.* xv, with Mayor's notes thereon.

Sanballat in Neh. xiii. 28, p. 190. But the passage is quite inconclusive. Whether Samaria had definitely broken with Jerusalem or not, it would need some authority at its head; and that authority may well have been vested in the sons of Sanballat, Nehemiah's contemporary and enemy. Amicable relations between the authorities at Samaria and the Persian governor in Jerusalem would not seem out of the question, even if a religious breach had taken place. On the other hand, if the breach had taken place, we cannot be sure that the colonists would be well informed as to its various bearings or even as to its significance.

All this seems disappointing. But in view of the immense importance of the Dispersion for later Judaism and for Christianity, nothing that casts light on any conditions in its earlier years can safely be neglected or despised; and if Aswan has nothing fresh to tell us about the history of Nehemiah or Ezra, it shows us a side of the Hebrew nature that we could only have guessed at from the historical books and the prophetic writings; it enables us to understand the popular side of Hebrew religion; and in the breadth of its secular activities and interests (a long section of the Ahikar romance and a copy of Darius's Behistun inscription were found with the more business-like documents) we can see the broader sympathies which revealed themselves in the Wisdom literature, which shaped the Apocryphal writings, and which have ended by turning the Jews into 'travellers in ideas' for the world.

NOTES ON SPECIMENS OF THE ASWAN PAPYRI

A. *A deed of divorce.*

The first document which is here selected is one of the best preserved of a large number of records of civil suits, in which a few outstanding names of members of the Jewish community figure constantly, but mixed as constantly with Egyptian and Persian names. Mibtahiah is a Jewess (whose life history can be traced in considerable detail), married to an Egyptian, Pi', and now divorced by him; other documents show that she had been previously married to a Jew, and immediately after this arrangement with Pi', she married another Jew, Ashor. She appears, here as elsewhere, as a woman of independent means, able and entitled to carry on business and manage property. Observe that there are no Jewish witnesses, and that the oath mentioned as taken by her is to the Egyptian goddess.

Later, as the names of the Jewish witnesses to the subsequent marriage contract show, she was regarded as restored to the Jewish community. The date is 441 B.C.

¹On the 14th of Ab, that is the 19th day of Pahons, year 25 of Artaxerxes the king, said Pi' ²b. Pahi, builder, of Syene the fortress, to Mibtahiah daughter of Mahseiah b. Jedoniah ³Aramaean of Syene, of the detachment of Warizath (as follows): In accordance with the action we took at Syene, let us make a division concerning the money ⁴and corn and garments and bronze and iron, all goods and possessions, and the marriage-document. Then an oath ⁵was imposed on you and you swore to me concerning them by the goddess Sati and my heart was content ⁶with that oath which you took to me concerning those your goods and I renounce all claim on you from ⁷this day for ever. I have no power to institute against you suit or process, you or son ⁸or daughter of yours in the matter of those your goods concerning which you have sworn to me. If I institute against you ⁹suit or process, or my son or daughter sue you in the matter of that your oath, I, Pi', or my son ¹⁰will pay to Mibtahiah the sum of 5 kerashin, royal weight, without suit or process, ¹¹and I renounce all suit and process. Petisi b. Nabunathan wrote this document ¹²in Syene the fortress, at the direction of Pi' b. Pahi. Witnesses hereto: Nabure'i b. Nabunathan. ¹³Luhi b. Mannuki. 'Odnahar b. Duma. Nabure'i b. Vashtan. (Endorsement.) ¹⁴Deed of quittance which Pi' wrote for Mibtahiah.

3. Note the military term 'detachment'. *the action which we took at S.*; the actual divorce proceedings.

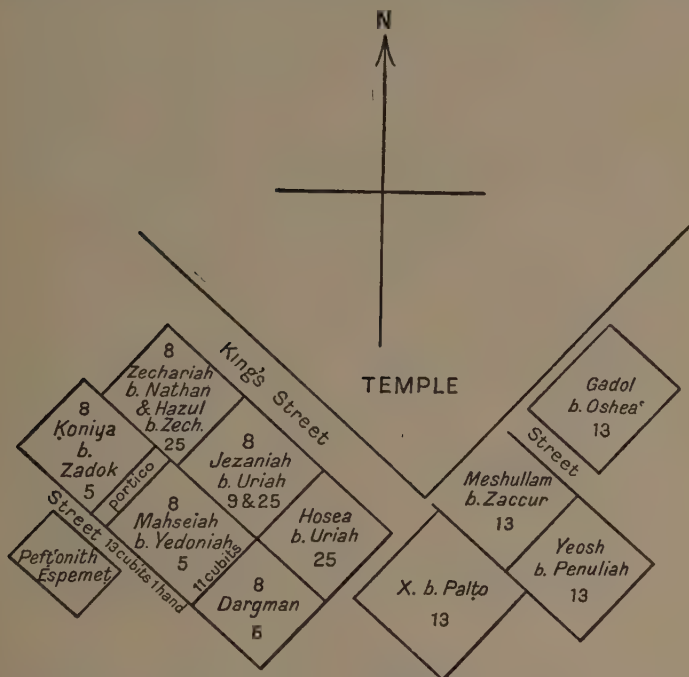
5. *Sati*. Pi', the Egyptian, would naturally require an oath by a native deity. Did the Jews believe in Sati or (a still greater name in Jeb) Chnum? Perhaps so, as Jephthah may have believed in Chemosh (Judges xi. 24). But to believe was not the same as to worship. There is no evidence that Mibtahiah thought of Sati as the Jewesses of Jeremiah's time in Egypt thought of the 'queen of heaven' (Jer. xlv. 17); still less that Sati could ever find her way into the temple of Jau.

B. *Directions from the Persian monarch for the holding of the
Feast of Unleavened Bread.*

This is one of the most important of the series. Unfortunately, it is as incomplete as the preceding is complete; its main purport seems clear; but so much of the document is missing that attempts at conjectural additions are very tempting. The document as it stands is as follows (omissions which present no difficulty being filled up, in italics):

To my brothers, Jedoniah and his colleagues, the Jewish garrison,

your brother Hananiah. May God greet you. Now in this year, the 5th year of King Darius (Darius II, i.e. 410 B.C.) word was sent from the king to Arsames . . . Now you accordingly count fourteen days . . . and from the 15th day to the 21st of *Nisan shall you eat unleavened bread*. Be clean and take heed. Do no work, drink no *beer* and nothing in which there is leaven *from the 15th of Nisan* at sunset to



Ground-plan of the Jewish temple at Elephantine, with the surrounding houses

the 21st of Nisan . . . shall you bring into your dwellings. Seal it up during those days. To my brothers Jedoniah and his colleagues the Jewish garrison, your brother Hananiah.

The date is quite clear. Hananiah is referred to in a later document (no. 38); evidently his coming to Egypt was an important event. Arsames, a high official, is mentioned in several other documents. *Unleavened Bread* (l. 5) does not actually occur in the text, but the reference to the days in Nisan makes it certain. The lacuna from which it has dropped out is so large, Cowley thinks, that it must have

contained a mention also of the Passover. Whether we suppose this or not, we have a distinct difficulty to meet. For in later Jewish practice Passover and Unleavened Bread were regarded as one festival, but originally they were distinct. The Book of the Covenant (Exod. xxiii. 14 ff.) and the ritual Decalogue in Exod. xxxiv mention the three feasts, of which the Unleavened Bread is the first, but leave out the Passover. The Passover, however, is mentioned in Deut. xvi, where it precedes the ritual for Unleavened Bread. It is also to be kept in the one central sanctuary. The description of Josiah's Passover in 2 Kings xxiii implies that the celebration was a new thing, and it was kept in Jerusalem, not throughout the country. In P (Ex. xii) the two feasts are joined, but the victim is killed by each householder for his family in the evening (see Gray, *Sacrifice in the Old Testament*, pp. 337 ff.). It seems clear that as early as Josiah the ritual for the two conjoined feasts was known in Jerusalem, though it was not identical with that of Ezra and P. How was it then that directions had to be sent to the Jews at Jeb just two hundred years later? The Passover *may* not (in spite of Deut. xvi) have been continuously or universally regarded as annual, or national; or the ritual, known in Josiah's time or instituted at his Reformation, may have fallen into neglect in the troublous times afterwards, or not have been applied to Jews outside Palestine. The rites of P were evidently on their way to a general recognition (see pp. 58 f.). The one thing that this document (if we include in it a mention of the Passover) clearly shows is that Ezra's reform, as a national event, could not have taken place. But can we suppose that the Passover was actually referred to in the message from Hananiah? The size of the lacunae and also the connexion of the two feasts in Deuteronomy suggest this; but they are far from decisive. Further, if we take the document simply as it stands, why should directions be given for Unleavened Bread? That was undoubtedly pre-Josian. But it might easily have fallen out of use in a distant foreign settlement; and the message does not necessarily imply that it was unknown, but only that it was to be held, and held in a certain way. Possibly it had been kept as a feast, but the strict prohibition of leaven had been forgotten. In that case we might find an analogy to the message in 1 Cor. xi.

We need not, however, conclude that the message was meant simply for the colonists at Jeb. The Great King would hardly legislate directly for that obscure corner of his dominions. He would appear to be issuing a rescript for the Jews throughout his empire; and the rescript finds its way, through the Intendant Arsames, and

the vigorous Jew Hananiah, to the borders of Egypt. It would be going too far to say with Meyer (*Papyrusfund*, p. 96) that this document shows Judaism to have been the creation of the Persian monarchy, or even that it proves the genuineness of the rescript of Artaxerxes in Ezra iv. But it affords important evidence for the continuity of a friendly Persian policy towards the religion of the subjects of the empire from Cyrus onwards, a policy which is certainly assumed (and quite historically) in the narratives of Ezra and Nehemiah.

For suggestions as to the possible effects of Hananiah's activities, see p. 220. The insertion of beer as the prohibited drink is probable, as neither wine nor water could be forbidden.

C. *A Jewish Complaint.*

The next document refers to an event of the year 411, which was probably made the subject of complaint very shortly afterwards. It appears to be addressed to Arsames, the Intendant referred to in the previous document. The beginning and a good deal towards the end have been lost. The following may be taken as a *précis* of what remains:

We Jews have been more loyal than the Egyptian forces. But during the absence of Arsames, the priests of Chnub, after bribing the governor Waidrang, destroyed some of the royal stores in the fortress of Jeb, demolished part of the building, added a fresh wall of their own, and stopped up the well. Evidence can easily be brought to prove this, and the fact that we on our side are innocent... not been found... to bring a meal-offering... to offer there to Jau... they took the fittings there for themselves... us of the Jewish garrison... injure anything which is ours... our... which they destroyed.

We may suppose that the complaint was sent in 410. Part of the outrage appears clearly enough, and the priests of Chnub or Chnum must have felt pretty sure of their ground if they could make an attack on military buildings and stores. Was the movement racial and social or religious? Probably both, as in popular riots in all ages when Jews have been the victims. The priests were the ringleaders; and Cowley in view of the following document suggests that the fragments at the end of the letter contained an account of interference with Jewish sacrifices in their temple. Did the Jewish soldiers themselves remain inactive while this outrage was being committed? Waidrang (the word appears to be Persian, but the pronunciation is uncertain) has been already named in the documents as military

governor of Syene; here he is promoted to be 'fratarak', a higher and Persian title (the word is from the same root as the Greek 'protos', first).

D. *A Petition to the governor of Judaea, describing the
destruction of the Jewish temple at Jeb in 411,
and asking for its rebuilding.*

It is written in 408. Is it a fuller account of the outrage described in the last letter? Did the story gain in gruesomeness as time elapsed? Or did a second or more determined attack in 411 follow the first? If there was only one attack, the first complaint looks like a remarkable under-statement. And did Jedoniah and his friends, after appealing to Arsames in vain, at last take the serious step of writing to the friendly governor of Judaea? The document is of such interest that it will be well to insert it *in extenso*.

¹To our lord Bigvai, governor of Judaea, your servants Jedoniah and his colleagues, the priests who are in Jeb the fortress. The health ²of your lordship may the God of Heaven seek after exceedingly at all times, and give you favour before Darius the king ³and the princes of the palace more than now a thousand times, and may he grant you long life, and may you be happy and prosperous at all times. ⁴Now your servant Jedoniah and his colleagues depose as follows: In the month of Tammuz in the 14th year of Darius the king, when Arsames ⁵departed and went to the king, the priests of the god Chnub, who is in the fortress of Jeb, (were) in league with Waidrang who was governor here, ⁶saying: The temple of Jau the God, which is in the fortress of Jeb let them remove from there. Then that Waidrang, ⁷the reprobate, sent a letter to his son Nephayan who was commander of the garrison in the fortress of Syene saying: The temple which is in Jeb ⁸the fortress let them destroy. Then Nephayan led out the Egyptians with the other forces. They came to the fortress of Jeb with their weapons, ⁹they entered that temple, they destroyed it to the ground, and the pillars of stone which were there they broke. Also it happened, ⁵gate-ways ¹⁰of stone, built with hewn blocks of stone, which were in that temple they destroyed, and their doors they lifted off (?), and the hinges ¹¹of those doors were bronze, and the roof of cedar wood, all of it with the rest of the furniture and other things which were there, ¹²all of it they burnt with fire, and the basons of gold and silver and everything that was in that temple, all of it, they took ¹³and made their own. Already in the days of the kings of Egypt our fathers had built that temple in the fortress of Jeb, and when Cambyses came into Egypt ¹⁴he found that temple built, and the temples of the gods of Egypt all of them they overthrew, but no one did any harm to that temple. ¹⁵When this was done, we with our wives and our children put on sack-cloth and fasted and prayed to Jau the Lord of Heaven, ¹⁶who let us see

(our desire) upon that Waidrang. The dogs tore off the anklet from his legs, and all the riches he had gained were destroyed, and all the men ¹⁷ who had sought to do evil to that temple, all of them, were killed and we saw (our desire) upon them. Also before this, at the time when this evil ¹⁸ was done to us, we sent a letter to your lordship and to Johanan the high-priest and his colleagues the priests who are in Jerusalem, and to Ostanes the brother ¹⁹ of 'Anani, and the nobles of the Jews. They have not sent any letter to us. Also since the month of Tammuz in the 14th year of Darius the king ²⁰ till this day we wear sack-cloth and fast. Our wives are made widow-like, we do not anoint ourselves with oil ²¹ and we drink no wine. Also from that (time) till (the present) day in the 17th year of Darius the king, neither meal-offering, incense, nor sacrifice ²² do they offer in that temple. Now your servants Jedoniah and his colleagues and the Jews, all of them inhabitants of Jeb, say as follows: ²³ If it seem good to your lordship, take thought for that temple to build (it), since they do not allow us to build it. Look upon your ²⁴ well-wishers and friends who are here in Egypt, (and) let a letter be sent from you to them concerning the temple of the God Jau ²⁵ to build it in the fortress of Jeb as it was built before, and they shall offer the meal-offering and incense and sacrifice ²⁶ on the altar of the God Jau on your behalf, and we will pray for you at all times, we, our wives, our children, and the Jews, ²⁷ all who are here, if they do so that that temple be re-built, and it shall be a merit to you before Jau the God of ²⁸ Heaven more than a man who offers him a sacrifice and burnt-offerings worth as much as the sum of a thousand talents. As to gold, about this ²⁹ we have sent (and) given instructions. Also the whole matter we have set forth in a letter in our name to Delaiah and Shelemiah the sons of Sanballat governor of Samaria. ³⁰ Also of all this which was done to us Arsanes knew nothing. On the 20th of Marheshwan the 17th year of Darius the king.



Egyptian Priest
(period of the Later Kingdom)

Reference has already been made to the important question of the character of the temple at Jeb. It will be clear from the above that the building, with its pillars of stone, and its seven stone gates, was much more than a synagogue or chapel; burnt-offerings, meal-offerings, and frankincense were regularly used in the ritual of the altar, and the gold and silver bowls recall the Jerusalem use with equal detail. On the other hand, there is no suspicion that religious opinion at Jerusalem could take the least umbrage at what was done at Jeb; nothing but sympathy is looked for. This would be quite

natural if, as we have suggested, the law in Jerusalem had not yet reached its final formulation, and if the currents of religious practice in Palestine, set in motion from Babylon, had not yet flowed to the far south-west. The hypothesis that Ezra's legislation was already stereotyped seems impossible.

1. The Judæan governor is the Bagoas of Josephus (see p. 238, where the quarrel between the governor and Joshua with Johanan—or, as he appears in this document, Jehohanan—is recounted). This letter must in any case have been written before Joshua's murder. The word for governor is the same as the Hebrew word applied to the Persian governor in Hag. i. 1, Neh. v. 14.

2. *the God of Heaven*: this title frequently appears in the official or semi-official correspondence in Ezra (i. 1; v. 12; vi. 9; vii. 12, 21).

8. Nephayan, Waidrang's son, has now been promoted to his father's previous position as military governor. It will be noticed that here the attack is from first to last upon the temple; hostilities to the fortress are not mentioned. Waidrang is still 'fratarak', not, like Bagohi, or Bagoas, 'pekah'. The Egyptian priests are spoken of, as in the previous letter, by a term used in the Old Testament only for idolatrous priests (Heb. *kemanim*, for which there is no English equivalent). The word for temple, however, is not Hebrew, but seems to be identical with the Assyrian *ekallu*.

13. *the days of the kings of Egypt*: the native kings, before the Persian conquest. The building may conceivably go back to the earliest known Jewish mercenaries in Egypt, under Psamtik or Psammetichus. Herodotus does not mention the actual destruction of Egyptian temples by Cambyzes, but the king certainly roused Egyptian religious opposition: and if the Jewish colonists received from Cambyzes the special favour that the Jewish exiles had received from his father, the Egyptians would not be likely to feel the more friendly to them.

The next statements imply that the colonists did defend themselves, and also that there had been other letters besides this and the message to Arsames.

18. *letter*, like 'temple', is a Babylonian loan-word. Nothing is known of Anani or his brother Ostanēs.

23 ff. Observe that the colonists are not strong enough to defy the natives of the place by rebuilding the temple themselves; but they make themselves responsible, very humanly, for a divine reward upon so good a work, and they add a discreet reference to the doubtless necessary bribe. (One does not, in the East, present a request either to a potentate, or to God, with empty hands.)

29. Finally, we learn that assistance has also been asked from the authorities in Samaria. Does this mean that Samaria is now an independent community? If the Samaritan secession narrated by Josephus had already taken place, we should hardly have expected the colonists (unless they were quite ignorant of the relations between the two communities) to have mentioned their appeal to the rivals of the Jews; nor would the high-priest and his colleagues at Jerusalem be likely to pay more attention to them for this reason. The mention of the son of Sanballat (clearly the Sanballat of Nehemiah's memoirs) rather suggests that relations between central and southern Palestine were still friendly. From Neh. xiii. 28, Johanan was probably brother-in-law to Delaiah and Shelemiah (see p. 189), and, in spite of the party which had supported Nehemiah and was later to carry through the reforms on which Ezra had set his heart, some of the most influential of the 'clergy' were still definitely opposed to the separatist ideals of the Priestly Code.

36. The last sentence, exonerating Arsames, especially in view of the former letter, is characteristically cautious.

E. Memorandum of reply from the authorities in Judaea and Samaria.

The expressions used here seem to suggest that the reply was a verbal one; and it is in any case rather contemptuously brief.

¹Memorandum from Bigvai and Delaiah. They said ²to me: Let it be an instruction to you in Egypt to say ³to Arsames about the altar-house of the God of ⁴Heaven, which was built in the fortress of Jeb ⁵formerly, before Cambyes, ⁶which Waidrang, that reprobate, destroyed ⁷in the 14th year of Darius the king, ⁸to rebuild it in its place as it was before, ⁹and they may offer the meal-offering and incense upon ¹⁰that altar as formerly ¹¹was done.

Two points are worthy of notice here. Arsames appears as an inferior officer to the representatives of the empire in Palestine; and permission is only given for non-animal sacrifices. This is another example of the interest which Persia took even in the details of the rites of its subjects. But why the limitation? Was it feared that the slaughter of animals would specially offend the Egyptians, like some of the habits of the early migrants into Egypt (Gen. xliii. 32)? But the Egyptians themselves brought sheep and oxen to their altars. The Zoroastrian Persians would have been more likely to take offence. But Bagoas did not object to animal sacrifices in the Temple at Jerusalem, although, to mark his horror of the murder of Jeshua, he imposed a fine of fifty drachmas for every lamb offered at the daily sacrifice

(Josephus, *Antt.* xi. 7, 1). Was it merely a political reminder to the colonists that they could not expect, even in the hour of victory, to have everything their own way? Or was it to keep their temple below the status of the Temple at Jerusalem, in being confined to the *minhah*, and debarred from *shelem* and *'olah*? It is at least a tempting guess that the priests in Jerusalem, anxious, for whatever reason, to maintain as far as possible the principle of a single sanctuary, after refusing to give any help of their own to the colonists, persuaded Bagoas thus to reduce the temple of Jeb to a sort of second rank. There exists, however, in a rather fragmentary state, another letter, from Jedoniah and four others, offering a thousand 'ardabs' of barley and a sum of money if they were simply allowed to offer meal and incense, but not sheep, oxen, or goats. It is of course possible that this letter was sent privately to Bagoas (though his name does not occur in what is left of the papyrus) at the same time as the other, and that he granted the smaller request.

Was the temple actually rebuilt? We do not know that Arsames ever troubled to carry out the instruction, which was not given directly to him by his superiors. But we have a hint of the fate that befell Jedoniah and his fellow-petitioners, successful as they had been, in a fragment which, as Cowley puts it, 'indicates a renewal of the pogrom described in the letter to Bagoas'. Only one letter belonging to the community is *dated* as being written after the pogrom; it would therefore appear that the fragment describes the last scene in the history of the colony (perhaps during the disturbances which brought the Persian rule in Egypt to an end about 404 B. C.). It breathes, in a curiously modern fashion, the spirit of the zealous nationalist and anti-Semite—the hundred per cent. Egyptian—who rejoices to think that there will now be no more foreign intrusion in his neighbourhood.

^{1, 2} Chnum, now these are the names of the women who were found ³at the gate in Thebes(?) and were taken prisoners: Rami, wife of Hodav, Asirshuth, wife of Hosea, Pelul, wife of Jislah, Re'ia⁴ Zebia, daughter of Meshullam, Jehola her sister. These are the names of the men who were found at the gate in Thebes(?) and were taken prisoners: ⁵Jedonia b. Gemariah, Hosea b. Jathom, Hosea b. Nathum, Haggai his brother, Ahio b. Mahseiah(?). They have left(?) ⁶the houses which they had entered in Jeb, and the property which they had taken they have restored indeed to the owners of it, but they mentioned(?) to his lordship the sum of ⁷120 kerashin. Moreover they will have no further authority here. Peace be to your house and your children till the gods let us see (our desire) upon them.

Such is the inglorious end of the first Diaspora community of which we have any detailed knowledge. It would seem ungracious to attempt to point a moral; but we can hardly resist the conclusion that it fell because the Jahvism which it professed had lost whatever vitality it might once have possessed. It had nothing either of the law, or the prophets. Its religion was the religion against which the prophets had protested—not wholly in vain; and which, when it had survived both the prophets and the exile, was being slowly superseded by the new ideals of Nehemiah and Ezra. Those ideals were austere and, by comparison with the prophets, unspiritual; they ruled out all the old joy of Hebrew religion; but their champions condescended to preserve something of what they must have thought its superstition; as for example the rites, unmentioned in the older codes, of the purification of the leper and the expulsion of the scape-goat. But the new ideals also preserved, if only in a kind of cold storage, the half-understood prophetic messages which were to find an unlooked-for fulfilment four centuries later; and they provided the nursery and home for a new exultation and confidence which, in the ‘Hymn-book of the Second Temple’, have inspired and guided the profound devotion and the soaring rapture of the Christian faith.

THE SAMARITAN SCHISM

WE have already seen that of the two possible dates for the founding of the Samaritan community, the second is the more probable (p. 60). We may now consider the question a little more in detail. Ever since the fourth or the third century B. C., the Samaritans have maintained their ground in Nablus, in the centre of Palestine, continuing their priesthood and their services, and offering their sacrifices on the same spot, century after century. They form, as has often been observed, the oldest religious community in the world. Possessing the Pentateuch as their one sacred book, and refusing ever to add to it, they have preserved their orthodoxy with a zeal that has been almost fanatical; and in fidelity to its commands, as they have understood them, they have refused either to add or to take away. So far from being lax, as their enemies have often alleged, they have been the strictest of conservatives, reminding one of the Sadducees among the Jews, who sternly rejected all the innovations in belief or practice introduced by the Pharisees. It is true, as their literature shows, that Cabbalistic speculation had a great attraction for them all through the Middle Ages; this is equally true of their rivals the Jews; but it had no influence on their scrupulous adherence to the Law.

The only definite account of the origin of their community is to be found in Josephus (*Antiquities*, Bk. XI. chh. vii and viii). Josephus relates that the high-priest John, about the end of the fifth century, in a quarrel with his brother Jesus (Jeshua), whose rivalry he feared, murdered him in a quarrel in the Temple itself. He had two sons, Jaddua, who inherited his office, and Manasseh. Manasseh married the daughter of a certain Sanballat, who had been sent by Darius into Samaria. This was felt in Jerusalem to be a scandal; and Manasseh was bidden to divorce his wife. Sanballat, however, encouraged him to refuse, and promised him, with the hoped-for help of Darius, to build a temple for him on Mount Gerizim, and make him priest there. Before this could be carried out, Darius had been defeated by Alexander; and Sanballat, quickly transferring his allegiance to the Macedonians, gained permission to build his temple, and Manasseh was duly installed. Later on, the number of worshippers at this 'apostate' sanctuary was increased by Jews who found the

restrictions of the Jewish law too severe. On the other hand, Nehemiah's story of the expulsion of the son-in-law of Sanballat in xiii. 28 ff. seems to refer to the founding of the 'apostate' community, which would then have to be placed a hundred years earlier.

It was an old quarrel, and its roots went much deeper than a personal dispute. Before deciding between our two accounts, it will be well to cast a glance backwards. At the fall of Samaria, as we read in 2 Kings xvii. 6, 24 ff., the territory of the Northern Kingdom was depopulated by the Assyrian conqueror, and foreigners from the East were brought in to take their place. They suffered, however, from wild beasts (always a danger in Palestine when population decayed), and a Hebrew priest was allowed to return to instruct them in the worship of the God of the country. He settled at Bethel (the old sanctuary), and the result was a composite worship of Jahveh and the foreign divinities. The narrative is strongly biased (cf. v. 34). That the worship of Jahveh was real and sincere (even if it was syncretistic) seems clear from Jer. xli. 4 and Zech. vii. 2 (see p. 160). And, from what we know of the parallel circumstances after the fall of Jerusalem, we may doubt whether the older inhabitants had been cleared out entirely. Josiah's reformation seems to have been carried out (so far as we use the term of a movement which even in Judah was far from wholly successful) in parts of central Palestine as well as in the south (2 Kings xxiii. 15). After the fall of Jerusalem, central Palestine would no longer be overshadowed by the religious prestige of the Temple there; and it would be only natural for the returning exiles in 538 to be regarded with suspicion and dislike by their neighbours.

What, then, was the character of this dislike? We have seen reason to believe (see p. 146) that the exiles who returned then were few; and that the bulk of the population in Judaea remained what it had been in the fifty years previous. But there is no hint of opposition before the return from exile. That opposition might conceivably have been either political, or social, or religious. But why should the central province entertain political fears? The whole of Palestine was now under the Persian dominion; an attempt at political independence on the part of Jerusalem might be a menace to the Persians, but only in a very secondary sense to the Samaritans. On the other hand, the cry 'the Jews are rebuilding their walls' would be very convenient to those who, for whatever reason, wished to excite Persian suspicions against the Jews. Of social opposition there seems

to be no trace ; the complaint of the Jews was that the central province was but too anxious to commence social relations, both commercial and connubial.

Was the opposition then religious ? Doubtless it was ; but it does not seem to have been the opposition between a false religion and a true. There is no evidence, beyond the rather tendentious narrative in 2 Kings xvii, and the non-Jewish birth of two of the Samaritan leaders, that the Samaritans were violently pressing a foreign cult upon the Jews, or even that they were worshipping other gods than Jahveh. On the other hand, this is precisely what was being done, at the end of the fifth century, by the colony of Jews at Aswan (see p. 218) ; but this made no difference either to their loyalty to Jahveh or to their good relations with the Jews at Jerusalem. The only things we know are that when the Temple was begun, the opposition of the 'people of the countries' was feared (Ez. iii. 3) ; that the 'adversaries' asked to be allowed to assist in the building, as true worshippers of Jahveh ; that they were repulsed (Ez. iv. 1-6) ; and that later on the work ceased for a time.

Evidently, the Jews were the unbending and irreconcilable party, and the Temple was the cause of the hostility. That is to say, the Jews had before them the law of the one sanctuary in Deuteronomy ; this they interpreted as meaning 'no local shrines', and also 'only at Jerusalem'. The Samaritans had the far older shrines of Bethel and Shechem and Dan in their territory ; did they not possess both Ebal and Gerizim (mentioned, as Jerusalem was not mentioned, in Deuteronomy itself) ? And if, in an over-religious zeal that reminds one of the Athenians at a later day, they desired to share in the Jerusalem Temple also, they would naturally be angered at the blunt assertion of an exclusiveness which had been unknown before Josiah. It was the opposition of the older to the newer Jahvism. But the Chronicler, living when this question had long been forgotten, and at a time when the Jews had the constant mortification of seeing a rival temple at a sacred spot which claimed a far higher antiquity than that of Jerusalem itself, was naturally content to depict the undying hostility of the 'schismatics', and to hint at dark forms of idolatry. Once the Temple was built, the quarrel became less heated. Even Zechariah hints at overtures from Bethel (see p. 160) and signs of both stricter and more liberal views are to be found in 3-Is. and Malachi (see pp. 167 ff.). Nor must we forget that the liberal can easily become the lax ; the dangers of the paganism of the local shrines, against which Josiah's reformation had protested, could not be guarded against

in the central province; were they guarded against even at Jerusalem under the tolerant rule of the Temple priesthood (Is. lxx. 1-13, lxxvi. 3)? Indeed, when Deuteronomy was forgotten at Jerusalem, there was nothing to rouse the uneasiness of Samaria.

Matters came to a head again, however, with the arrival of Nehemiah. The Jews in Babylon and Susa had preserved an ideal of theoretical strictness unknown to Judaea; and Judaea had its practical difficulties in the proximity and influence of Samaria. Nehemiah, as we have seen reason to believe, was devoted to the law as it had taken shape in the main provisions of Deuteronomy. The Temple was not enough to secure the Deuteronomic idea. There had been a Temple before Josiah. The Jews must be socially and municipally secure (they could not of course be politically independent) if they were to be religiously untainted. Nehemiah therefore began work at once upon the city walls. The Samaritans understood him from the first. They were as resolved as their grandfathers to have no Deuteronomic Jerusalem on their borders; still less could they welcome the city's social and commercial independence. They had much to gain from trade with the city, while Nehemiah was determined to shut the open door; and they and their friends and connexions in Jerusalem had profited by the economic slavery of the Jewish small farmers, which Nehemiah was resolved to bring to an end. The threatened dissolution of mixed marriages, besides other unpleasant consequences, would only make the breach complete. The Samaritans, therefore, struck at Nehemiah in every way they could; but they were gradually out-manœuvred, and on Nehemiah's second visit, a member of the high-priestly family, who had married Sanballat's daughter, was driven off in disgrace (Neh. xiii. 28).

Here, it is urged, is the real origin of the Samaritan schism; and Josephus, placing it a century later, must have been in error; first, because Nehemiah is obviously a much better authority than Josephus, and secondly, because the details of Josephus' account are suspiciously like those of Nehemiah. But it must be observed that Nehemiah says nothing about a schism, a temple, or a rival priesthood at Samaria. He only says that he 'chased from him' the son-in-law of Sanballat. It is not even clear that the culprit was driven into exile; v. 25 suggests, indeed, a rather more personal and direct attack. But, it is asked, could there have been two Sanballats at Samaria, within a hundred years of one another, and two priestly sons-in-law? Surely this is not impossible. And if the leading

families in Samaria were anxious to retain friendly connexions with important people in Jerusalem, why should not both Sanballats have looked in the same direction for a son-in-law? Nehemiah, it may be noticed, does not insert the name of the son-in-law of *his* Sanballat.

In the previous pages we have argued that the Priestly Code was not promulgated till fifty years after Nehemiah; but if this view is right, the schism could not have taken place till the later date, as the Pentateuch, which the schismatics had with them, was not yet in existence; but even if the earlier date is preferred, it is difficult to see how the schismatics would have seized upon a work of which they had previously known nothing, and which had only within the last few years been accepted by their bitter enemies.

We conclude, then, that Nehemiah was simply getting rid of a specially close friend of his opponents by way of carrying out his 'purge'. When Ezra comes upon the scene, at the beginning of the fourth century B. C., mixed marriages still form a grave problem. His arrival follows upon the scandal in Jerusalem of the murder by the high-priest of his own brother, in a quarrel fomented by the Persian governor Bagoas, and the appeal for help, directed first to Jerusalem and then to Samaria, of the Jewish colonists in upper Egypt. These Jews are living in a state of religion which ignores both the Priestly Code and Deuteronomy; but they do not expect to be regarded at Jerusalem as unorthodox; and when, finding that no help is to be gained from Jerusalem (the Jews being for the moment out of favour with Bagoas, after the murder of Joshua), they apply to the northern community at Samaria, they betray no suspicion that the Samaritans are now animated by deadly hatred against whatever bears the name of Jew.

Ezra then finds a community in which, in spite of Nehemiah's efforts fifty years before, the principles of Deuteronomy are by no means paramount. But he has, what Nehemiah had not, a strong body of opinion behind him in his pressure for reform. He could not use Nehemiah's drastic measures; but he carried through his commission with success. The list of *divorcants* contains a hundred and three names. But divorce from the point of the Jewish law was not a very serious matter (Deut. xxiv. 1-4; cf. Matt. xix. 7 ff.); and the proceeding was probably not as exciting as it appears to us. More important was the acceptance of the Priestly Code and the whole Pentateuch as the work of Moses. It is, indeed, impossible to say when this was complete; but if it was not actually the work of Ezra, Ezra's

achievements made it simply a matter of time. Worship was now definitely recognized as confined to Jerusalem; and the more elaborate ritual made possible by the larger revenues of the clergy, would now, we may suppose, be carried out at the Temple.

What, then, was the attitude of the opponents of Ezra's measure? Did the laxer party in Jerusalem accept the new regulations? They would not be likely to be averse to the new dignities of the priesthood secured by the Priestly Code now embodied in the recognized Mosaic law; but as regards their feeling towards the stress on racial purity which was so important to Ezra, an interesting suggestion is conveyed by the story in Josephus. The high-priest has married his son to Sanballat's daughter. And he is not alone in this. A number of such alliances have been made. But this is felt by public opinion to be an unendurable scandal: and the husband is faced by the alternatives of divorcing his wife or being banished from the state. We can thus distinguish three stages in the growth of separatism, against the background of a slowly deepening feeling of hostility to foreigners and insistence on full conformity to the Jewish law for resident aliens; first, the vigorously enforced protests of Nehemiah; second, the commission of Ezra; and third, the definite defeat of the laxer party fifty years later.

The attitude of the Samaritans is more obscure. When the new community is established, we find it in possession of a single sanctuary on Mount Gerizim, and of the Pentateuch. They claim to be the true and orthodox representatives of Mosaism. They have accepted the Deuteronomic law of the single sanctuary, but they have identified this, not with the Temple on Mount Zion, but with the older 'place', consecrated by the memories of the patriarchs, at Shechem. We have no reliable information as to the steps by which this position was reached. A great religious movement of this kind, as we have already urged, is not brought about by personal quarrels, like those of Josephus' story, though a personal quarrel may be the immediate occasion. And Josephus is plainly wrong in saying that men fled from the more rigid rules of Jerusalem to the freedom and licence of Samaria. Left as we are to conjecture, we can but conclude that the Samaritans, who had as free access to the literature of the past as the Jews, who were as anxious as the Jews to worship Jahveh as he desired to be worshipped, and who regarded themselves as the genuine descendants of the chosen nation, received the new edition of the Law with the same enthusiasm as that which had led their ancestors to ask to be allowed to

co-operate in the rebuilding of the Temple; but that they still refused to identify the place where Jahveh had set his name with Jerusalem. When, therefore, if we may so far follow Josephus, the quarrel with Manasseh took place, they took the definite step, and announced that theirs was the one true temple where God ought to be worshipped.

This will explain why the Jews regarded the sanctuary on Mount Gerizim with a hostility never felt for the temples at Jeb and Leontopolis. The latter were unauthorized and irregular; but they were built to satisfy local needs, and they did not seriously challenge the position of the Temple on Mount Zion. The temple on Gerizim was an avowed rival, with which there could be no truce. Jesus, if the expression may be permitted, almost goes out of His way to recognize the Samaritans as being on as high a moral and religious level as the Jews; and if, in the well-known narrative in John iv, He expresses the Jewish point of view on the vexed question of the locality of worship, He immediately passes beyond it to a conception of God which Jews and Samaritans alike might have learnt from their prophets, as confined to no buildings or places, but inhabiting eternity with the humble of heart.

Two interesting textual points may here be noticed. The Pentateuch, as the Samaritans have preserved it, is in the main identical textually with our Massoretic text, though minute differences are very numerous. But in Exod. xx. 17, immediately at the conclusion of the Decalogue, is inserted a command to build a temple on Mount Gerizim; and in Deut. xxvii. 4, instead of Mount Ebal, as the place where the law is to be inscribed and an altar built, Gerizim is substituted.¹

It only remains to add a few extracts from the account of Josephus (*Antiquities*, xi. 7, 8).

Johanen the high-priest (the grandson of Eliashib) had a brother Jesus, who was a friend of Bagoas (the Persian governor of Jerusalem), and Bagoas promised him the high-priesthood. Relying on this, Jesus came across Johanen in the Temple, and a quarrel arose in which Johanen actually murdered his brother—a double crime, pollution of a shrine and fratricide, surely unknown even among savages. Providence, however, was on the watch; the community was reduced to slavery and the Temple desecrated by the Persians. . . .

On the death of Johanen, his son Jaddua succeeded to the high-priesthood. He too had a brother, Manasseh. The last king of Persia, Darius, had sent to Samaria, as provincial governor or satrap,

¹ It may be remarked that Ebal is the only place actually mentioned in Deuteronomy as a site for sacrifice.

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The same passage from a MS. of the Samaritan Pentateuch, written in the 'Samaritan' Script.

Sanballat, a 'Cuthaeen' by nationality, as were also the Samaritans. Sanballat, aware of the conspicuous position of Jerusalem, and of the difficulties its ancient kings had caused to the Assyrian empire and to Coele-Syria, seized the opportunity of giving his daughter Nicaso in marriage to Manasseh. Such an alliance, he expected, would ensure happy relations between him and the entire Jewish community. . . .

The priests in Jerusalem, however, indignant at the idea that the very brother of the high-priest should be married to an alien, commenced an intrigue against him. Would not this marriage open the door to all who wished to disobey the law of racial purity, and so lead to a general freedom of relations with aliens? Was not such inter-marriage as this the root cause of the former captivity and its miseries? Manasseh was given the choice of dismissing his wife or abdicating his sacerdotal functions. The high-priest joined in the popular indignation and forbade his brother to approach the altar. Manasseh then had recourse to his father-in-law Sanballat. 'I love your daughter,' he said; 'but I am hardly willing to lose, on her account, the highest honour my country has to bestow.' 'I will preserve your priestly rank,' Sanballat replied; 'I will give you the power of the high-priest, and I will assign you authority in every place where I am governor, if you will retain my daughter as your wife; I will build for you a temple like that at Jerusalem on Mount Gerizim',—the highest mountain in Samaria—'and I can rely on the favour of Darius the Persian monarch.' Filled with confidence at these offers, Manasseh remained with Sanballat, expecting to receive the high-priesthood at the hands of Darius, as Sanballat was already advanced in years. Jerusalem, however, was thrown into tumult, since many, both of the priests and of the laity, were implicated in these mixed marriages, and they were all for seceding to Manasseh, while Sanballat was ready with offers of money and land and houses and was giving the warmest support to his son-in-law's party.

[At this point Alexander invades the Persian Empire; and Darius advances westwards against him.]

Delighted at the presence of Darius, Sanballat now announced to Manasseh that he would fulfil his promises at the moment of Darius' victorious return. He shared the conviction of the whole empire that the Macedonians with their small numbers would be unable to come to close quarters with the Persian forces.

[Darius, however, is defeated, and Alexander becomes supreme in Western Asia.]

Seizing the favourable moment, Sanballat renounced his allegiance to Darius, and at the head of eight thousand of his people, he approached Alexander, whom he found commencing the siege of Tyre. He offered to hand over to Alexander all the regions under his authority, and was ready to welcome the change of sovereignty from Persia to the Macedonian king. Alexander received him with smiles; and Sanballat, now in good heart about his projects, began to talk about his son-in-law Manasseh, the brother of the Jewish high-priest Jaddua, and the general wish of his compatriots that a temple might be built in his territory. He pointed out the advantage to Alexander

himself of dividing the Jewish power into two halves, so that the race should never unite and renew the embarrassments they had once caused to the rulers of Assyria. Alexander gave his assent; whereupon Sanballat threw himself with the utmost energy into the work of building the temple, and installed Manasseh as priest. Could he confer a greater boon on his daughter's descendants? But after Tyre had been besieged for seven months, and Gaza for two, Sanballat died.

[Then follows a long account of Alexander's dealings with the Jews, who were quite as obsequious as Sanballat.]

On the death of Alexander his empire was divided among the succession kings; but the temple on Mount Gerizim remained in being. Any one who was held guilty in the Jerusalem community of eating forbidden food or of Sabbath-breaking or any similar illegality, would take refuge, as an innocent exile, with the people at Shechem.

Josephus here has nothing in common with Nehemiah's narrative except the two names, Eliashib and Sanballat, and Sanballat's connexion with a member of the priestly caste in Jerusalem. The murder of Jesus or Jeshua must have taken place at the end of the fifth or the beginning of the fourth century, when Bagoas or Bagohi (see p. 229) was governor of Judaea. If Jaddua was born in 390 A.D. he would be fifty-seven at the death of Darius: Manasseh was presumably the younger brother. If he was seven years younger, and thirty years younger than his father-in-law, Sanballat II, Sanballat would be eighty at the time of his death.

The genealogy of the high-priests as given in Neh. xii. 10 f. is Eliashib (a contemporary of Nehemiah), Joiada, Jonathan (the Johanan of Josephus), Jaddua. From v. 23, Johanan (here called the son of Eliashib) appears to be a contemporary of Ezra. He is the high-priest mentioned in the Aramaic papyri (see p. 227).

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THE OLD TESTAMENT

CHRONOLOGICALLY ARRANGED

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N.B.—The dates of the Kings of Israel and Judah are taken from the article 'Chronology of the Old Testament' in the *Encyclopaedia Biblica*; and the articles in Peake's commentary and in Hastings' *Dictionary of the Bible* on the separate books have been consulted. Other books which have been used are the *International Critical Commentary*, the *Westminster Commentaries*, the *Expositors' Bible*, the *Century Bible*, Dr. Driver's *Introduction to the Literature of the Old Testament*, Dr. Oesterley's *Books of the Apocrypha*, and Dr. Charles' *Apocrypha and Pseud-epigrapha*.

Principal Foreign Power = the principal foreign power with which Israel was in contact at the time.

Inscriptions = inscriptions, chiefly on Babylonian and Assyrian monuments which refer to events in the history of Israel. These are mostly translated in the Appendix to Dr. Foakes-Jackson's *Biblical History of the Hebrews*. The Code of Hammurabi, Selections from the Tell el-Amarna letters, and the Babylonian Flood Stories are published by S.P.C.K.

The Book of Genesis, divided into sources by Dr. T. H. Robinson, is published by the National Adult School Union.

Book.	Contents.	Origin.
<i>The Hexateuch</i>	Genesis to Joshua—contains four strands of narrative : (i) Jahvistic, Judaeen in origin, <i>circ.</i> 850 B.C.; (ii) Elohist, Ephraimitic in origin, <i>circ.</i> 750 B.C., both written from a prophetic standpoint; (JE combined <i>circ.</i> 650 B.C.). (iii) D Deuteronomic revision, 7th century B.C.; (JED combined early in Exile). (iv) P Priestly author and editor, 5th century B.C., (JEDP combined and re-edited before 3rd century B.C.).	
N.B.—No analysis of sources is given, but large portions belonging to the Priestly writer are indicated, as it is important to recognize the later standpoint.		
<i>Genesis</i>	i-xi. Prehistoric Narratives. xii-xlix. Stories of the Patriarchs.	JEP.
<i>Exodus</i>	The Exodus and Wanderings.	JEP (xxv-xxxix, xxxv-xl P).
<i>Numbers</i>	The Story of Wanderings.	JEDP (i-x. 28, xvii-xix, xxvi-xxxix, xxxiii-xxxvi P).
<i>Joshua</i>	The Conquest of Canaan.	JEDP (xv-xix P).
<i>Judges</i>	The Conquest of Canaan and Settlement of Tribes.	Compiled from old material (perhaps JE) by a Deuteronomic editor, 6th century B.C.
<i>1 and 2 Samuel</i>	History of Establishment of Monarchy, and Early Kings.	Two strands of narrative of 9th and 8th centuries B.C. woven together by a Deuteronomic editor, 6th century B.C.
<i>1 and 2 Kings</i>	History of Kings of Israel and Judah from Solomon to Fall of Jerusalem.	Compiled from Court and Temple records and biographies of prophets by a Deuteronomic editor, and re-edited during the Exile.

<i>Important Events.</i>	<i>Date B. C.</i>	<i>Principal Foreign Power.</i>	<i>Inscriptions.</i>
Hammurabi's Code of Laws, based on an older Sumerian Code.	<i>circ.</i> 1950	First Babylonian Empire, 2050- 732 B.C.	Code of Hammu- rabi. Tell el - Amarna Letters (1450- 1370). Stele of Raamses (Rameses) II (1300-1234) found at Beth-shan, showing that Se- mites had built city of Raamses. Stele of Merneptah (1234-1225 B.C.).
Crossing of Jordan.	<i>circ.</i> 1196	Egypt.	
Philistines settling in Canaan, <i>circ.</i> 1200 B.C.			
SAUL	1025		
DAVID	1000		
SOLOMON	970		
Division of Kingdom.	933		
<i>Kings of Judah.</i> <i>Kings of Israel.</i>			
REHOBOAM JEROBOAM	933		
ABIJAM	916		
ASA	914		
	912		
NADAB	911		
BAASHA			

<i>Book.</i>	<i>Contents.</i>	<i>Origin.</i>
<i>Amos</i>	Warning to Israel by a Judæan.	Prophecies delivered in the reign of Jeroboam II (2 Kings xiv. 23-9), 760-746 B.C.
<i>Hosea</i>	Warning to Israel by an Israelite.	Prophecies delivered in reign of Jeroboam II, and later (2 Kings xiv. 23-xv), 746-734 B.C.
<i>Micah</i>	Denunciations of Israel and Judah by a Man of the People.	Chapters i-iii—prophecies delivered in reigns of Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah (2 Kings xv. 32, xvi, xviii-xx)—739-693 B.C. Chapters iv-vi anonymous prophecies, added later.
<i>Isaiah i-xxxix</i>	The Statesman-Prophet's Warnings to Jerusalem.	Prophecies delivered in reigns of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah (2 Kings xix. 20, xx), 739-701 B.C. (omit xiii-xiv. 23, xxi, xxiv-xxvii, xxxiv, xxxv, and possibly other passages which are post-exilic).

Important Events.	Date B. C.	Principal Foreign Power.	Inscriptions.
<i>Kings of Judah. Kings of Israel.</i>			
ELAH	888		
ZIMRI	887		
OMRI	887		
AHAB	876		
JEHOSHAPHAT	873	Assyria (Shalmaneser III. 859).	Moabite Stone. Karkar Inscription.
Battle of Karkar	853		
AHAZIAH	853		
JORAM	853		
Completion of Jahvistic narrative.	850		
JEHORAM	849		
AHAZIAH	842		
ATHALIAH	841		
JEHU	841		
Jehu pays tribute to Shalmaneser.	841		
JOASH	835		Black Obelisk of Shalmaneser.
JEHOAHAZ	814		
JOASH	797		
*AMAZIAH	795		
AZARIAH or UZZIAH	789		
JEROBOAM II.	782		
JOTHAM (regent)			
Compilation of Elohistic narrative	750		Tiglath-Pileser III reduces Hamath.
ZECHARIAH	743		
SHALLUM	743		
MENAHEM	743		
JOTHAM	739		
Menahem pays tribute to Tiglath- Pileser III.	738		Tribute of Menahem.
PEKAHIAH	736		
AHAZ	735		
PEKAH	735		
Ahaz pays tribute to Tiglath- Pileser III.	734		
HOSHEA	730		Hoshea placed on throne by Tiglath- Pileser III.

* The Biblical Chronology here obviously needs reconstruction. The dates given here are those of Marti in *Encycl. Biblica*; cf. Steuernagel, *Einleitung*, and Box, *Isaiah*.

<i>Book.</i>	<i>Contents.</i>	<i>Origin.</i>
<i>Jeremiah</i>	Warnings and Pleadings to Jerusalem.	Prophecies uttered in reigns of Josiah, Jehoiakim, Jehoiachin, and Zedekiah (2 Kings xxii-xxv). Earlier prophecies written down by Baruch; later prophecies, especially xlii-li, added by a compiler during or after the Exile—626-500 B.C.
<i>Zephaniah</i>	Doom of Wicked Nations.	Prophecy uttered <i>circ.</i> 626 B.C., when the Scythians were threatening Jerusalem, and edited in post-exilic times.
<i>Deuteronomy</i>	The Law-Book (with additions) found in the Temple, on which Josiah based his reform.	A revision of the earlier laws, compiled <i>circ.</i> 640 B.C.
<i>Nahum</i>	Doom of Nineveh.	Chapters ii and iii written <i>circ.</i> 612 B.C.; chapter i a post-exilic acrostic poem.
<i>Habakkuk</i>	Moral Problem raised by God's use of Chaldeans.	Chapters i and ii written <i>circ.</i> 600-550 B.C., when Chaldaea, i.e. New Babylon, was becoming powerful; chapter iii a lyric ode of post-exilic date.
<i>Ezekiel i-xxxii</i>	Prophecies of Doom, and Denunciations of Jerusalem and foreign nations.	Written in Babylon before the Fall of Jerusalem by an exile banished in 596 B.C.
<i>Ezekiel xxxiii-xxxix</i>	Picture of the Restitution of Israel.	Written in Babylon after the Fall of Jerusalem—584-572 B.C.

<i>Important Events.</i>	<i>Date B. C.</i>	<i>Principal Foreign Power.</i>	<i>Inscriptions.</i>
<i>Kings of Judah. Kings of Israel. Fall of Samaria</i>	721		Capture of Samaria by Sargon II.
<u><i>End of Kingdom of Israel</i></u>			
*HEZEKIAH	{ 720? 715?		Siloam Inscription. Invasion of Sennacherib.
Invasion of Sennacherib	700		
MANASSEH	692		
AMON	638		
JOSIAH	637		
	625	New Babylonian Empire founded by Nabopolas- sar.	
Finding of Law-Book (2 Kings xxii)	621		
Reform of Josiah	621		
Fall of Nineveh	612		
Battle of Megiddo	608		
JEHOAHAZ	608		
JEHOIAKIM	607		
Battle of Carchemish	605	Nebuchadrezzar King of Baby- lon 604-561.	
JEHOIACHIN	597		
First deportation to Babylon	596		
ZEDEKIAH	596		
Fall of Jerusalem	586		
<u><i>Exile.</i></u>			

* See Dr. Robinson's note, p. 232. If the view is accepted that Hezekiah was associated with Ahaz for a time, this would dispose of part of the discrepancy.

<i>Book.</i>	<i>Contents.</i>	<i>Origin.</i>
<i>Ezekiel</i> xl-xlvi	A Vision of the Ideal Theocracy.	Written after 572 B.C.
<i>Lamentations</i>	A Book of Dirges.	These poems, arranged as acrostics (except ch. v), are of exilic date.
<i>Isaiah</i> xl-lv	The Promise of Return.	Prophecies delivered by an unknown author at the close of the Exile, probably between 549 and 538 B.C. The Servant-Songs are possibly later.
<i>Obadiah</i>	Doom of Edom.	Verses 1-14 belong to an exilic prophecy; the rest is probably post-exilic.
<i>Leviticus</i> xvii-xxvi	The Law of Holiness.	Old Laws of Priestly character grouped together towards the close of the Exile.
<i>Haggai</i> } <i>Zechariah</i> i-viii }	Call to rebuild the Temple.	{ Prophecies delivered 520 B.C. (Ezra v, vi). Prophecies delivered 520, 518 B.C.
<i>Isaiah</i> lvi-lxvi	The Restored Community : its Faults and its Blessings.	Prophecies delivered by an unknown author in Palestine <i>cir.</i> 450 B.C.
<i>Malachi</i>	Rebuke of the Moral and Religious Condition of the Jews.	Probably delivered <i>cir.</i> 450 B.C.
<i>Ruth</i>	A Pastoral Idyll.	Probably used as a Tract for the Times about Foreign Marriages in Nehemiah's day.
<i>Job</i>	A Wisdom-Book, treating of the Problem of the Innocent Sufferer.	Probably based on an older story by a post-exilic author.
<i>Leviticus</i>	The Priestly Code of Laws.	Compiled during the Exile, and possibly published by Ezra.
<i>Joel</i>	The Day of the Lord.	The date is probably early in the fourth century B.C.

<i>Important Events.</i>	<i>Date B. C.</i>	<i>Principal Foreign Power.</i>	<i>Inscriptions.</i>
Cyrus overthrows the Medes.	549	Persian Empire.	
Capture of Babylon by Cyrus.	538		
Edict of Cyrus.	538		
<i>The Return.</i>			
Return of Zerubbabel and Joshua (Ezra i, ii).	537		
Building of Temple.	520- 516		
Dedication of Second Temple (Ezra vi. 16).	516		
		Artaxerxes I.	
Return of Nehemiah (Neh. ii).	445		
Nehemiah's second visit (Neh. xiii. 7).	433		
		Artaxerxes II.	
Ezra's Return.	? 397		
		Artaxerxes III (Ochus).	
Jaddua, High Priest (Neh. xii. 11).	351		
Samaritan Schism.	335		

<i>Book.</i>	<i>Contents.</i>	<i>Origin.</i>
<i>Zechariah ix-xiv</i>	An Apocalyptic Vision.	The work of a post-exilic prophet or prophets, <i>circ.</i> 320 B.C. or later.
<i>Jonah</i>	An Evangelical Allegory.	Written <i>circ.</i> 300 B.C., and probably based on an old tradition.
<i>1 and 2 Chronicles</i>	History re-edited from an ecclesiastical standpoint.	Compiled, with additions, from previously existing sources by a Temple Levite, <i>circ.</i> 300-250 B.C.
<i>Ezra</i> } <i>Nehemiah</i> }	Narrative of the Return and Rebuilding of the Temple.	Compiled by the Chronicler, <i>circ.</i> 300 B.C., from City and Temple records, Aramaic documents, and memoirs.
<i>Proverbs</i>	One of the Wisdom-Books of the Hebrews, containing Moral Maxims.	Several collections of Proverbs of various dates combined by an editor, <i>circ.</i> 250 B.C.
<i>Song of Songs</i>	A Marriage Drama, showing the triumph of faithful love.	Probably written in Jerusalem during the Greek period.
<i>Esther</i>	A Didactic Romance.	Written, perhaps on an historical basis, <i>circ.</i> third century B.C., to defend the keeping of the Feast of Purim.
<i>Ecclesiastes</i>	A Wisdom-Book, containing the Meditations of an Unsatisfied Man.	Written <i>circ.</i> 200 B.C.
<i>Psalms</i>	The Hymns Ancient and Modern of the Second Temple.	Five books of gradual growth, containing 'Praise-Songs' dating probably from the time of David to the second century B.C.
<i>Daniel</i>	An Apocalypse of Encouragement.	Probably founded on an older story, and written <i>circ.</i> 168 B.C. to encourage the Maccabean party.

<i>Important Events.</i>	<i>Date B. C.</i>	<i>Principal Foreign Power.</i>	<i>Inscriptions.</i>
Alexander the Great becomes ruler of the world.	331	Macedonian Empire. Ptolemaic and Seleucid Empires.	
Conquest of Palestine by Alexander.	331		
Death of Alexander and division of his Empire.	323		
Palestine under the Ptolemies of Egypt.	311		
Antiochus III conquers Palestine.	198		
Persecution of Jews by Antiochus IV (Epiphanes).	169		
Maccabaeen Revolt against Antiochus Epiphanes.	167		

A list, chronological as far as possible, is appended of the principal in the Alexandrian Canon (the Septuagint), but not in the were never included in either Canon, but are important as greatly

Book.		Contents.	Origin.
APOCRYPHA.	APOCALYPTIC.		
<i>Ecclesiasticus</i> (Wisdom of Jesus, son of Sirach.)		A Wisdom-Book, containing counsels for daily life.	Written in Hebrew, probably <i>circ.</i> 180 B.C., and translated into Greek by the author's grandson, <i>circ.</i> 130 B.C.
<i>Tobit</i>		An Idyll of Home-Life.	Written probably in Aramaic, <i>circ.</i> 190-175 B.C.
	<i>Book of Enoch</i>	A series of Apocalyptic Visions.	Written in Palestine by several Hebrew authors belonging to the party of the Hasidim, between 170 and 64 B.C.
<i>Prayer of Asariah</i>			An addition to the Greek text of Daniel, probably written in Hebrew, <i>circ.</i> 170 B.C.
<i>Song of the Three Children.</i>		The Thanksgiving of the Three for Deliverance (<i>Benedicite</i>).	Dating from the Maccabean triumph, <i>circ.</i> 165 B.C.
<i>1 Esdras</i>		History of the Jews from the reign of Josiah to the Proclamation of the Law (639-? 400 B.C.).	Written probably at Alexandria between 170 and 100 B.C.
<i>Rest of Esther</i>		Contains additional details as to Esther, probably imaginary.	A Greek interpolation in the Hebrew text, <i>circ.</i> 150 to 100 B.C.
<i>Judith</i>		A story of the Deliverance of Israel from Assyria by a Jewess.	Written <i>circ.</i> 150 B.C. and edited <i>circ.</i> 60 B.C.
<i>Baruch</i>		A work in four divisions, containing prayers of Exiles and messages to Exiles.	Written by three authors, probably between 2nd century B.C. and 2nd century A.D.
	<i>Testaments of the XII Patriarchs.</i>	The Dying Commands of Jacob's Twelve Sons.	Written, probably in Hebrew, by Hasidim, <i>circ.</i> 130-10 B.C. (contains later Christian interpolations).
<i>2 Maccabees</i>		History from the reign of Seleucus IV to the death of Nicator (176-161 B.C.). (Parallel with part of 1 Maccabees, but not so trustworthy.)	Probably abridged <i>circ.</i> 40 A.D. from a larger work by an Alexandrian Jew, written <i>circ.</i> 120 B.C.

Apocryphal and Apocalyptic Books. The *Apocrypha* were included Palestinian Canon (Massoretic Text). The *Apocalyptic* writings influencing New Testament thought and phraseology.

<i>Important Events.</i>	<i>Date B. C.</i>	<i>Principal Foreign Power.</i>	<i>Inscriptions.</i>
		Seleucid Empire.	
Maccabæan Revolt.	167		
Re-dedication of Temple.	165		
Death of Judas Maccabæus.	160		
Jonathan, High-Priest.	160		
Simon, High-Priest, and Ethnarch.	142		
Independence of the Jews.	142		
John Hyrcanus.	135		
Rise of Pharisees and Sadducees.			
JOHN HYRCANUS, King of Judæa (Hasmonean Dynasty).	107		

Book.		Contents.	Origin.
APOCRYPHA.	APOCALYPTIC.		
1 <i>Maccabees</i>		History of the Jews from the accession of Antiochus Epiphanes to the death of Simon (175-135 B.C.).	Compiled from existing sources in Hebrew by a devout Jew, between 100 and 90 B.C.
<i>Story of Susanna</i>		A Story in praise of the wisdom of Daniel.	Probably written to support new laws as to witnesses, <i>cir.</i> 100 B.C. An addition to the Greek text of Daniel.
<i>Story of Bel and the Dragon</i>			Perhaps written originally in Aramaic ; an addition to the Greek text of Daniel, <i>cir.</i> 100 B.C.
<i>Wisdom of Solomon</i>		A Wisdom-Book inculcating the beauty of Divine Wisdom.	Written by an orthodox Alexandrian Jew, <i>cir.</i> 100-50 B.C.
<i>Prayer of Manasses.</i>		A Jewish Penitential Psalm.	Perhaps written in Greek —date uncertain.
	<i>Psalms of Solomon or Psalms of the Pharisees.</i>	Eighteen Psalms, containing important Messianic teaching.	Written in Hebrew by a Pharisee, 70-40 B.C., probably for use in synagogues.
	<i>Book of Jubilees</i>	The narrative of Genesis, rewritten from a later standpoint.	Written in Hebrew by a Palestinian Jew, <i>cir.</i> 40-10 B.C. or later.
	<i>Secrets of Enoch</i>	An Account of the Creation.	Written in Greek by an orthodox Alexandrian Jew between 30 B.C. and 50 A.D.
2 <i>Esdras</i>		An Apocalypse, containing Visions of Ezra at Babylon.	A Jewish work, probably belonging to 1st century A.D., with later Christian interpolations.

<i>Important Events.</i>	<i>Date B. C.</i>	<i>Principal Foreign Power.</i>	<i>Inscriptions.</i>
ARISTOBULUS I. ALEXANDER JANNAEUS.	105 104		
ALEXANDRA.	78		
HYRCANUS II and ARISTOBULUS II dispute the throne. Rise of the House of Antipater.	69	Roman Empire.	
Pompey enters Syria and conquers Jerusalem.	65		
Judaea divided into five districts.	57		
Antipater becomes Procurator of Judaea.	47		
HEROD, King of Judaea. Herod marries Mariamne, the last of the Hasmoneans.	37 35		
Herod's Temple begun.	20		
Death of Herod.	4		

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